PIONEER METHODISM IN MISSOURI

by J. E. GODBEY, D. D.

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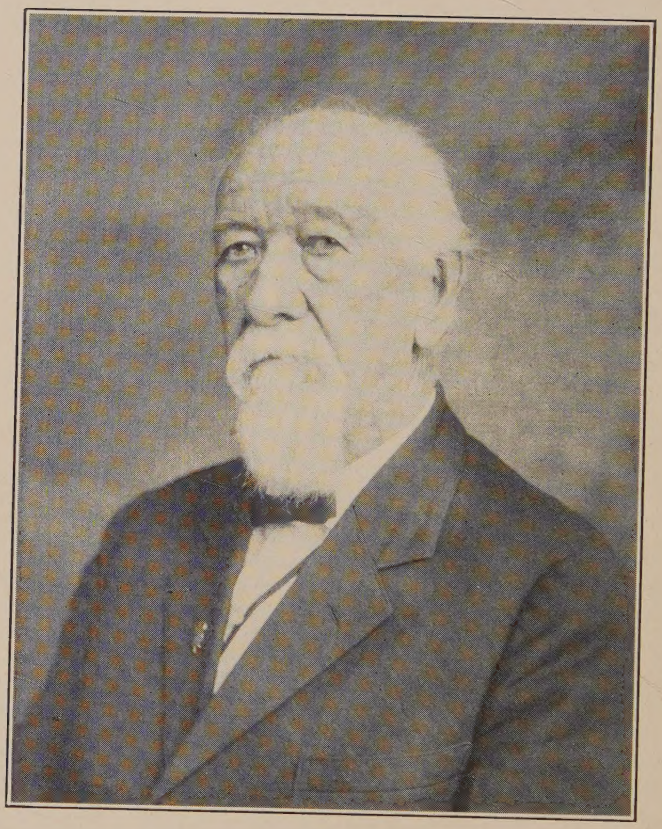

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INTRODUCTION

I AM sensible of the high honor involved in the request of the publisher to prepare a personal and biographical introductory statement for what will be, perhaps, the valedictory contribution to the Church of one who for fourscore years and ten has been an exemplar of all the high ideals for which the Church stands. It is no easy task that I undertake, for to my incompetence to do justice to the cause in hand is added, in my case, a bias, which, in some eyes, may unfit me to evaluate this work, and a personal tenderness of feeling which prompts to what may seem an out-of-place extravagance of expression.

Twenty years ago I sat at the feet of Dr. John E. Godbey, philosopher, in the college classroom, and, though his successors in the relation of teacher have been numerous, he stands distinct and without a peer in my memory to-day. Not on account of the materials of his instruction, most of which I have long since forgotten, but because of a gentle spirit and benign personality which made him master. During the intervening years he has been to me a revered friend, a mentor whose wise

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guidance and sympathetic insight have been unfailing, a scholar whose wisdom and progressive outlook have been challenging, a saint whose very presence has been a benediction.

Dr. Godbey became a Methodist preacher in Missouri seventy years ago. For thirty-five sucessive years he served in the ranks, in positions lowly and distinguished, within the state. There followed a period of seventeen years of service in the adjoining state of Arkansas. Then a return to Missouri eighteen years ago. Thus for more than fifty years he has been laboring within the borders of the commonwealth, and for seventy has been in close touch with its affairs. Furthermore, his father before him was a Methodist preacher from 1841 to 1890, eleven years in Kentucky, the last thirty-eight years in Missouri. Adding direct tradition to personal experience, we have in Dr. Godbey a full century of Missouri Methodist history, for he had acquaintance with preachers who served in Missouri more than a hundred years ago.

No living man is better equipped to write the real history of Missouri Methodism. When Dr. Godbey came to Missouri there were many people still living who had heard

Jesse Walker, who founded the first Methodist Church in St. Louis. In a very real sense Dr. Godbey goes back to the beginning. He relates from original documents the distinctive features of early Methodism in Missouri.

How fitting, and yet how unusual a thing it is that this rare man should, at ninety years of age, produce these sketches of history for the Church! I well remember, and still with a living thrill, his remarkable words recounting, when presented with the cane carried by the oldest Methodist preacher in Missouri, his experience as a preacher: "I have gone haltingly *along* the way, but I have never gone a step *out of* the way." He is still in the way of service, and this volume constitutes a contribution of great value to the Church. May it be read and reread by all who walk along the way.

ELMER T. CLARK, *S.T.D., LL.D.*

PREFATORY NOTE

In order to present a correct view of the conditions under which the pioneer Methodist preachers planted their church among the first settlers of the Middle West, and to illustrate their faith and consecration to the Master's cause in the privations and burdens which they bore and the work which they performed, constrained by the love of Christ, the writer of this booklet has collected and collated, chiefly from the reports of the preachers themselves, during the first four decades of the history of Methodism in Missouri, the illustrative sketches presented in the following pages, in compliance with a request of the Preachers' Meeting of the St. Louis District of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South.

The reader will not find here a full detail of any man's labors for the Church. Many who were as faithful and efficient as those here mentioned are passed without notice. It served the writer's purpose better simply to assemble a group of characteristic pictures from which may be judged the circumstances

and the spirit which controlled the Methodist pioneers.

The fathers have left us a rich legacy, not alone in the fruitage of their sowing, but even more in the example of their faith and fidelity in the "high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

FOREWORD

The Louisiana Purchase

In the year 1541, De Soto, the great Spanish adventurer and explorer, discovered the Mississippi River. In 1682, La Salle, a French adventurer and explorer, after some achievements in Canada, sailed down the Mississippi to its mouth, naming the country on either side of the river "Louisiana," in honor of Louis XIV, King of France, and taking possession of it in the name of that monarch.

In 1762, France ceded her claims east of the Mississippi to England, and the territory west to Spain. In 1800, Spain returned Louisiana to France, and, in 1803, under the administration of Thomas Jefferson, the territory of Louisiana was purchased by the United States from Napoleon Bonaparte, Emperor of France, for the sum of $15,000,000.

The purchase of Louisiana Territory was in this wise: President Jefferson desired to obtain possession of New Orleans because of its value as a commercial port, and proffered,

in exchange, to aid in protecting the possessions of France west of the Mississippi. But Napoleon, being in financial straits, and having grasped more territory than he could defend, and desiring to strengthen power to oppose the schemes of Great Britain in America, proposed to sell to the United States all of Louisiana.

The country secured to the United States by the Louisiana Purchase represents a territory equal in geographical extent to England, Ireland, Scotland, Wales, France, Germany, Spain, Italy, the Netherlands and Switzerland. It is now represented in thirteen states, Louisiana, Arkansas, Missouri, Iowa, Minnesota, North Dakota, South Dakota, Wyoming, Colorado, Kansas, Nebraska, Montana and Oklahoma.

This stroke of policy more than doubled the territory of the United States and also made sure to us all the country west to the Pacific Ocean. Yet such is the power of political prejudice, that enemies of Mr. Jefferson ridiculed him for spending $15,000,000 to purchase a desert "fit only for prairie dogs."

In that portion of Louisiana which lay east of the Mississippi River, and which France ceded to England in 1762, the most important

settlement of the French was at Kaskaskia. As this place is frequently referred to in our early Methodist annals, we give it a short notice:

As early as 1675, the French Catholics had established a mission among the Kaskaskia Indians, near the present city of Utica, on the Illinois River. Under the direction of Henri Tonty, an associate of La Salle, this mission was moved, about 1700 A.D., to a place near the junction of the Kaskaskia River with the Mississippi, and about three miles back from the Mississippi, opposite to where St. Genevieve, Missouri, now stands. Here the French developed the most important town of the West—a preëminence which it held for nearly a hundred years. It was the chief trading post on the river above New Orleans. The Jesuits built there a college and a convent. The inhabitants were wealthy. The place was called the "Paris of the West." It became the first capital of the territory of Illinois and, also, later, the first capital of the State of Illinois. With the removal of the capital in 1819, Kaskaskia began to decline. The Mississippi steadily encroached upon the town, cutting away the alluvial soil upon which it was built. In 1892, the river had

eaten its way to the channel of the Kaskaskia, so changing the place of confluence of the rivers, and leaving most of the town, including all its ancient buildings, on an island.

This island was cut away by a succession of floods and the last of it went into the river in 1899. North of the junction of the two rivers still remains about one-third of the old town with the foundations of the old capitol and of a church. In 1890, the state of Illinois appropriated $50,000 to remove the cemetery. The population which once made Kaskaskia a gay and flourishing city are buried, or, at least, have their cenotaphs, on the bluff back of where the city stood, and the place is marked by an imposing monument. Kaskaskia is a fit symbol of things which are now but a memory.

CHAPTER I

From the Introduction of Methodism in Missouri to the Organization of the Missouri Conference

THE territory acquired by the Louisiana Purchase came into the possession of the United States with a population of 10,120 whites and negroes.

The oldest town in this territory was St. Genevieve, founded in 1755. St. Louis was founded by Pierre Laclede in 1763 and grew so rapidly that two years later, in 1765, it was made the capital of Upper Louisiana. In 1775, St. Louis had eight hundred inhabitants, St. Genevieve four hundred and sixty. Carondelet and St. Charles were both established in 1767 and Flourisant in 1776.

Under the Spanish rule, all settlers of the country were required to be "good Catholics." But the desire for population made the officers of the law lenient in inquiring into the creed of applicants. They passed the matter by putting some questions of a general character, suggested by the Apostles Creed, such as "Do you believe in Almighty God? The

Holy Trinity? The true Apostolic Church? Jesus Christ our Saviour? The Holy Evangelists?" and so on—questions which Protestants did not hesitate to answer in the affirmative. But, as the laws forbade the building of houses of worship, the administration of the sacraments, or the organization of societies by any religious denomination except the Catholics, Catholic control of the country seemed sufficiently assured.

The first sermon delivered by a Protestant preacher to an audience west of the Mississippi River, was preached by John Clark, a local Methodist preacher, then living at New Design in the American Bottom, about thirty miles north of Kaskaskia. The preacher did not venture to set foot on Spanish territory, but stood upon a rock about twelve feet from the bank of the river, and addressed a small company of people who stood on the shore. This was in 1798, and at the place where the town of Herculaneum now stands. Shortly after this Mr. Clark began to venture across the river to hunt up Protestant settlers and preach in their cabins. It is said that he visited as far west as Point Labadie—about fifty miles from St. Louis—and that, at Coldwater Creek, twelve miles north of St. Louis,

he found a settlement of Methodists and Baptists to which he thought it worth while to give especial attention.

The work of Mr. Clark was not in the least denominational. He recognized the law which forbade the organization of Protestantism, and only sought to so associate the few Protestants whom he found in the settlements as to keep alive their religious faith and conscience. To Christians situated as they were, the word of the Lord was very precious, and they came many miles to hear the preacher. Mr. Trudeon, the commandant at St. Louis, was indulgent toward Clark and his friends. It is reported that Mr. Abraham Musick, of St. Louis, applied to the commandant for a permit for Clark to hold services in his house. The officer very positively forbade church services being held by a Protestant; but proceeded to say, "Don't put a bell on your house, don't ring a bell, don't call your house a church, don't allow the preacher to baptize anybody, and so long as you remain a good Catholic (he knew Musick was a Baptist), your meetings shall not be disturbed." Trudeon knew of Clark's preaching tours, but made it convenient to discover the intrusion only when the preacher had finished his round, and then

he would command him to get out of the territory in a hurry—an order which the preacher would obsequiously obey.

In 1799, a special edict was issued forbidding the holding of religious services by the Protestants and Clark found it best not to tempt the authorities by open visits. It is said that he continued work at Coldwater by visits made at night. He would go up on the east side of the Mississippi to the mouth of Wood River, where, by previous arrangement, a friend from the opposite side would take him over and furnish him a horse to ride to the settlement. He would preach and return before daylight.

John Clark was an extraordinary man. He was born in the Parish of Patty, Highlands of Scotland, November 29, 1758. He became a sailor when a boy and, until he was thirty-two years old, his life was full of adventures. He was admitted to the Methodist itineracy on trial in Georgia, in 1791, served several circuits, was ordained Deacon and Elder, located in 1795, taught school in Kentucky, and, later, settled at New Design, north of Kaskaskia, in Illinois. He was an earnest Christian and his ministrations were equally acceptable to all Protestants, for he was free from denomi-

national prejudices and did as much for founding the Baptist Church in Missouri as he did for the Methodists. Mr. Clark joined the Baptist Church in 1811. He died in 1833 in the home of Wm. Patterson at Coldwater, and was buried in the little cemetery at Coldwater where his tomb may now be seen, well preserved. His funeral was preached by John Glanville, preacher in charge of the St. Louis Circuit, which then included Coldwater Church.

After the beginning made by Clark, and before regular work in Missouri was taken up by any Methodist Conference, Thomas McBride, Samuel Rodgers, and Robert Oglesby, visited the settlements in Missouri and preached to the Protestant settlers. Oglesby was a regular itinerant, who was appointed to work in Illinois in 1805, and, in the same year, crossed the Mississippi and made a tour of inspection through the east part of the territory, along the river.

Were the history of the beginning of Methodism in Missouri fully written, it would be seen that the early developments were sporadic, and accomplished quite as much through a number of local preachers and laymen as by the regular ministry. This was

characteristic of the developments of Methodism everywhere in the early times.

It was in 1806 that the machinery of the Methodist itineracy got to work west of the Mississippi. The first regular appointment was made from the Western Conference, held by Bishop Asbury at the Ebenezer Meeting-house in Greene County, Tennessee. John Travis, admitted on trial at that Conference, was appointed to Missouri Circuit. There was then no Missouri territory; it was still Louisiana. The circuit was named for the river and was in Cumberland District. This district included all of middle Tennessee and all of the settled portions of Indiana, Illinois and Upper Louisiana. St. Louis and Nashville were in the same presiding elder's district. William McKendree was the presiding elder, and made the quarterly round of this territory on horseback, along roads which were but paths through a wilderness, often swimming rivers.

We have an account of a camp meeting which McKendree held in the Coldwater neighborhood in the summer of 1807. He was assisted by Abbot Goddard, of Barren Circuit, Kentucky, James Gwin, a local preacher, and Jesse Walker, of the Illinois

Circuit. Mr. Gwin gives an account of the meeting.

"In the year 1807, Brother McKendree, A. Goddard and myself, set out to visit the settlements in Illinois. We crossed the Ohio River, took to the wilderness and traveled until night. Not being able to get to any habitation, we camped out. Brother McKendree made us some tea, and we lay down under the branches of a friendly beech and had a pleasant night's rest. Next morning we set out early, traveled hard, got some distance into the prairie and there took up for the night. This was a night of trouble. After we had taken a morsel to eat and had offered up our prayers to God, we lay down to rest and fell into a deep sleep. About eleven o'clock Brother McKendree awoke and found our horses gone. After some search, we found they had passed over a small stream and had taken back the way we came. Not knowing whether they had been stolen or had left of their own accord, leaving Brother McKendree at our camp, Brother Goddard and I went in pursuit of them. As the night was dark, we got dry bark, which afforded us a tolerable light. We followed their tracks across the prairie and overtook them about eight o'clock next morning, having traveled fifteen miles on foot. The next night we reached the first settlement, tarried a day there and, crossing the Kaskaskia River, we reached Turkey Hill, and lodged with an old

Brother Scott. Here we met with Jesse Walker, who had formed a circuit and had these camp meetings appointed for us.

"After resting a few days, we set out for the first camp meeting. In twelve miles we reached the Mississippi, and, having no means of taking our horses across, we sent them back, crossed the river and, with our baggage on our shoulders, went to the camp ground, having fallen in with Brother Travis on the way. About forty were converted at this meeting."

This camp meeting, the first ever held in Missouri, was on Coldwater Creek, about twelve miles north of St. Louis. The company of preachers crossed the river about the place where Herculaneum now stands, and walked forty miles, carrying their baggage. It was at Coldwater that John Clark had first planted Methodism in Missouri. Gwin continues his story:

"From the camp meeting we returned, crossed the river to Judge L's, who refreshed us, and sent forward our baggage in a cart to Brother Garret's, where our next meeting was to be held, which was called the Three Springs. We arrived on Friday at the camp ground, which was situated in a beautiful grove surrounded by a prairie. A considerable congregation had collected, for the news of the other meeting had

gone abroad and produced much excitement. Some were in favor of the work and some were opposed to it. A certain Major had raised a company of lewd fellows of the baser sort to drive us from the ground. On Saturday, while I preached, the Major and his company rode into the congregation and halted, which produced considerable confusion and alarm. I stopped preaching for a moment and quite calmly invited them to be off with themselves, and they retired to the spring for a fresh drink of brandy. The Major said he had heard these Methodists before; that they always broke up the peace of the neighborhoods wherever they went; that they preached against horse racing, card playing and every other kind of amusement. However, they used no violence against us, but determined to camp on the ground and prevent us doing harm. But at three o'clock, when Brother Goddard and I were singing a hymn, an awful sense of divine power fell on the congregation, when a man with a terrified look ran to me and said, 'Are you the man that keeps the roll?' I asked, 'What roll?' 'That roll,' he replied, 'that people put their names on when they are going to heaven.' I supposed he meant the class paper and sent him to Brother Walker. Turning to Brother Walker, he said, 'Put my name down, if you please,' and then fell to the ground. Others started to run off and fell; some escaped.

"We were busy in getting the fallen to one place, which we effected about sunset, when the

man who wished his name on the roll arose and ran off like a wild beast. Looking around upon the scene and listening to the sobs, groans and cries of penitents reminded me of a battle-field after a heavy battle. All night the struggle went on. Victory was on the Lord's side. Many were converted, and by sunrise the next morning there was the shout of a king in the camp. It was Sabbath morning and I thought it was the most beautiful morning I had ever seen. A little after sunrise, the man who had run off came back, wet with the dews of the night, and with strong symptoms of derangement. At eleven o'clock Brother McKendree administered the holy sacrament; and, while he was dwelling on its origin, nature and design, some of the Major's company were affected and we had a melting time. After sacrament, Brother McKendree preached to a large and intelligent congregation, all the principal men of the country and all in reach, who could get there, being present. His text was, 'Come now and let us reason together,' and perhaps no man ever managed the subject better or with more effect. His reasoning on the atonement, the plan of salvation and the love of God was so clear and strong, and delivered with so much pathos, that the congregation involuntarily rose to their feet and pressed toward him from all points. While he was preaching he very ingeniously adverted to the conduct of the Major, and remarked, 'We are Americans, and some of us have fought for our

liberty, and have come here to teach men the way to heaven.' This seemed to strike the Major and he became friendly and remained so ever after.

"This was a great day. The work became general; the place was awful, and many were born of God. Among the rest was our wild man. He lived in the American Bottom, had a fine estate and was a professed atheist. He told us that, a few nights before we passed his house, he dreamed that the day of judgment was at hand and that three men had come from the East to warn the people to prepare for it; that so soon as he saw us he became alarmed; he believed we were the men and, having ascertained where we were from, who we were, and where we were going, he came to the camp meeting. He became a reformed and good man."

Mr. Gwin relates that from Three Springs they went to Goshen, where they had a good camp, a large attendance of well-disposed people, and received into the Church at the close of the meeting one hundred members.

As to Travis, his work was to explore the country and establish appointments wherever he thought best. From Coldwater as a center, he visited the settlements both north and south of the Missouri River and westward, probably as far as the Gasconade. He was in Missouri

but one year, his next appointment being in Mississippi.

For his year's work in Missouri, Travis received the sum of twenty dollars. At that time, the salary of a preacher, as fixed by the Discipline, was eighty dollars, whether bishop, presiding elder or circuit rider. There was no difference except in the matter of traveling expenses. At the Conference, Travis received thirty-two dollars out of the helping fund.

In 1807, the Western Conference was held at Chillicothe, Ohio, and two circuits appeared in Missouri—Missouri Circuit, including all the work north of the Missouri River, to which Jesse Walker was appointed, and the Meramec Circuit, including all south of the river, to which Abraham Wilcox was sent. William McKendree was presiding elder, but, being elected bishop in 1808, James Ward succeeded him. At the end of the year, Missouri circuit reported sixty-six white members; Meramec, forty-four white and six colored members. Missouri was still in Cumberland District.

It was seldom that a married man was received into the Conferences in those times, but we find this entry in the minutes of this Conference:

"Who are admitted into full connection?

Answer: "Jesse Walker, who entered the traveling connection in the capacity of a married man. He has traveled in the Cumberland District, a man of considerable gifts and usefulness, who still feels willing to give himself to the work. His character examined and stands fair."

In 1808, the Western Conference was held at Liberty Hill, Tennessee. Missouri was now in the Indiana District; William Parker, presiding elder. The Missouri appointments were: Missouri Circuit, Abraham Amos; Meramec Circuit, Joseph Oglesby; Coldwater, John Crane. At the close of the year, Missouri Circuit reported 102 members; Meramec, 354; Coldwater, 75.

The Conference for 1809 was held in Cincinnati. (Missouri still in Indiana District; William Parker, presiding elder.) We note that John Crane, who the year before served Coldwater, was, this year appointed to Missouri Circuit. Isaac Lindsey failed to do the work on Coldwater, and John Crane undertook to care for this charge also. It extended from the Mississippi to the Gasconade River. It is said that Mr. Crane often swam the Missouri River, crossing from one circuit to

the other. The exposure gave him cold, resulting in early death.

Meramec Circuit this year was in charge of Joseph Oglesby. It included work from the Meramec River southward. This year the Cape Girardeau Circuit was formed from its territory.

It was in July, 1809, that Mr. Parker visited Cape Girardeau and preached the first sermon ever heard there from a Methodist. He stopped with the family of Mr. Scripps, whom he had known in Virginia. John Scripps, then a boy, was deeply impressed by the sermon. The presiding elder sent Jesse Walker to preach regularly at Cape Girardeau. In March, 1810, Jesse Walker, accompanied by John Scripps, crossed the Big Swamp to New Madrid and preached in that section, the first preaching heard there, and organized the New Madrid Circuit. The Circuit reported thirty white members at the close of the year and Cape Girardeau one hundred. In 1811, New Madrid was attached to Cape Girardeau.

On Good Friday, 1810, the first camp meeting on the Cape Girardeau Circuit was held, about twelve miles west of town; Parker, Walker and Wright were the preachers.

The Conference of 1810 was held at New Chapel, Shelby County, Kentucky. (Missouri still in Indiana District; Samuel Parker, presiding elder.) Missouri Circuit, Thomas Wright; Meramec Circuit, John McFarland; Coldwater, George A. Colbert; Cape Girardeau, Jesse Walker. But immediately after the Conference, arrangements were made by the presiding elder for Jesse Walker to travel the Illinois, Meramec and Coldwater Circuits in conjunction with George A. Colbert. At the end of the year, the work in Missouri showed a slight loss of membership, beginning the year with 528 and ending with 512.

"At this time," says Dr. McAnally, in his "Methodism in Missouri," "a very considerable accession in the territory had been given by emigration from Tennessee and Kentucky. The settlements in the neighborhood of St. Louis, St. Charles, St. Genevieve and Cape Girardeau received the greater portion of these, though New Madrid and the post of Arkansas were strengthened in this way. The population had increased to nearly twenty thousand, including three thousand slaves. About fifteen hundred of these were in what is now the State of Arkansas."

The Western Conference for 1811 was held

in Cincinnati, commencing October 1. The name of the District embracing Missouri was changed from Indiana to Illinois, and Samuel Parker was presiding elder. John Cord was sent to Missouri Circuit, Thomas Wright to Meramec, David Fraley to Coldwater, and John McFarland to Cape Girardeau and New Madrid. This was the year of the great earthquake and it is recorded that the Church gained fifty per cent from the shaking-up it thus received. The gain was not very substantial or permanent. It had lost the year before and it suffered heavy loss the year after. The people were not settled. They were constantly hearing that it was better farther on. Neighborhoods rose like flocks of birds and moved west, and church societies, which had been built up by revivals, melted away in a few months.

The General Conference of 1812 divided the Western Conference, forming the Ohio Conference and the Tennessee Conference. Missouri was assigned to the Tennessee Conference. It was in the Illinois District, which embraced Illinois, Indiana, Missouri and Arkansas.

The Tennessee Conference held its first session at Fountain Head, Tennessee, November

1, 1812. Jesse Walker was placed in charge of the Illinois District; Jesse Hale of Missouri Circuit; John McFarland was sent to Coldwater; Thomas Wright to Meramec; Benjamin Edge to Cape Girardeau, and William Hart to New Madrid. The total membership of the church, which in the former year had risen to 893 from 512, now declined to 833, although the field was well manned and faithfully worked.

In 1813 the Tennessee Conference convened at Rees Chapel, October 7. Illinois District was assigned to Jesse Walker. Coldwater and Meramec Circuits were consolidated and had two preachers, John McFarland and Richard P. Conn. Missouri Circuit, Jesse Hale; Cape Girardeau, Thomas Wright; New Madrid, Thomas Nixon. There was loss of members; 893 at the beginning of the year; 804 at the close.

In 1814 the Tennessee Conference was held in Logan County, Kentucky, and convened September 29. Missouri District was formed. It embraced Missouri and Arkansas. Samuel H. Thompson was presiding elder. In Missouri the appointments were: Missouri Circuit, William Stribling; Coldwater and Meramec, Jacob Whiteside; Saline, John Mc-

Farland; Cape Girardeau, Thomas Wright; New Madrid, Asa Overall.

Saline Circuit now first appears in the list. It lay between the Meramec and Cape Girardeau Circuits and was named from a stream in St. Genevieve County.

The Tennessee Conference for 1815 was held at Bethlehem Meetinghouse, Wilson County, Tennessee, commencing October 20. Samuel Thompson was appointed presiding elder of Missouri District. The other appointments in Missouri were: New Madrid, Phillip Davis; Saline, Thomas Wright; Bellevue, Wm. Stevenson; Coldwater, Benjamin Proctor; Missouri, Jacob Whiteside; Boonslick, Joseph Piggott. The Bellevue Circuit now takes the place of the Meramec. The Boonslick was mainly on the north side of the Missouri River, and west of the Missouri Circuit. Thus it will be seen that there were now five circuits south of the river and two north of it, the five south of the river being all embraced in what is now the territory of the St. Louis Conference. The conference year began with 941 and ended with 958 members.

Our notes have now brought us to the time of the organization of the Missouri Confer-

ence, eighteen years from the first Protestant preaching in Missouri by Clark, and ten years from the appointment of Travis—the first Methodist itinerant to Missouri. It is fitting, at this point, that we introduce a few sketches which will illustrate the character of the work.

CHAPTER II

The Field and the Laborers

THE pioneer itinerant preached almost every day upon his long journeys. Take this illustration from the diary of John Scripps, who describes the round which he and another preacher made with Jesse Walker on his district (the Illinois District) in 1812, which then included the Missouri work:

> "On Monday, the 18th, Jesse Walker, J. Patterson and myself set out for the Massac camp meeting, to be held at the Rock and Cave, on the Ohio River. We traveled this day in an easterly direction, through a generally uninhabited country and almost pathless woods, thirty-two miles to Thomas Standard's, where a congregation, previously notified, awaited our arrival. The exercises of the evening were thrillingly interesting and continued until midnight. About noon the next day we separated, still tending onward in devious paths, to hold night meetings six or eight miles apart, to meet the next day, probably again to part for the night, so as to hold as many meetings as our number and the location of the neighborhood would permit. On Friday, the 22d, we reached

the camp ground. Services commenced immediately upon our arrival and during the entire progress of the meeting we had precious seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord, several conversions and many accessions to the Church. Brother J. Johnson was with us one night and preached for us. Brother Walker closed the services with an interesting discourse on Monday, but Monday night found him several miles on his way to his next appointment, again holding forth to a large congregation in Proctor's meetinghouse. But to particularize his labors would swell this account to too great an extent. Suffice it so say that crossing the big Wabash near its mouth, we descended the river in the territory of Indiana, crossed Black River, Patoka and White Rivers to Brother Johnson's, about twelve miles from Vincennes. The next Friday, April 29, the quarterly meeting for Vincennes Circuit was held. It was a time of power and closed Monday morning. We made a short travel that day of six or eight miles and held a night meeting at Dr. Merrick's; the next day, noon, at Herrington's Tavern; at night, at Anthony Griffin's on Black River. We crossed the Wabash and commenced the Wabash quarterly meeting Friday, May 6, at Brother Hannah's, in a blockhouse, from which our next appointment was one hundred and seventy or eighty miles to the southwest across the Mississippi, in New Madrid Circuit, Missouri Territory, commencing Friday, the 13th. Thence

sixty miles north to Cape Girardeau Circuit, May 20th.

"At both these appointments, and all subsequent appointments through the summer, camp meetings were held, the necessity for which grew out of the fact that no one-room, or even two-room, log cabin (and we had no other sort of house) was capable of entertaining one-half, or even one-fourth, of one of Jesse Walker's quarterly meetings, for his regular Sabbath congregations collected from far and near, from ten, twenty and thirty miles around. From Cape Girardeau, Brother Walker proceeded by himself to hold a camp and quarterly meeting on Saline Circuit, commencing Friday, the 27th; on Meramec Circuit, June 3; Coldwater, June 10; Missouri Circuit, the 17th—to which appointment, following the circuitous route he had to travel, it was upward of two hundred miles north. And here, on Monday, June 20, he concluded his second round of meetings, about eighty miles northwest of home, and sixty from Goshen, the commencement of his round, where he again preached on returning to his family, there to enjoy a few days' respite, to repair his itinerant gear and prepare for the still more extensive operations of his summer campaign, under the more favorable auspices of shallow streams, better roads, longer days and the sweltering fervor of a July sun."

As respects the style of living of the early

settlers, and the fare of the preacher, we have this note from John Scripps:

"Our nights were generally spent in one-room log cabins, which constituted our meetinghouse, kitchen, nursery, dining room and bedroom, all in the space of sixteen feet square and, not unfrequently, a loom occupying one-fourth of it, together with spinning wheels and other apparatus for manufacturing apparel—our congregations requiring our services until ten or twelve o'clock; our supper after dismissal. We have sometimes sat in the large fireplace, occupying the entire end of the cabin, and plucked from out the smoke of the chimney, pieces of dried and smoked venison, or jerk, the only provision the place could afford us. Our horses fared worse in muddy pens, or tied to saplings or corners of the cabin, regaled with the refuse of the winter's fodder, sometimes on seed corn, purchased in Kentucky at a dollar a bushel, and brought in small quantities, according to the circumstances of the purchaser, a hundred miles or more, at some expense and trouble. This, where they had it, in spite of our remonstrances, they would pound in mortars to make us bread. Beds were of various qualities, generally feather beds, but not infrequently, fodder, shucks, straw, and, sometimes, only a deer skin, but always the best the house could afford, either spread on the puncheon floor, before the fire, from which we had to rise early to give room for the breakfast

preparations, or on a patched-up platform attached to the wall, upon which the preacher would take his place, and which, not infrequently, would fall down in the night, with its burden of three in a bed. Such incidents would occasion a little mirth, but we would soon fix it up and be asleep again."

One of the preachers describes the manner in which supper was prepared in the cabin after he had dismissed his congregation, at about eleven o'clock. The good wife seemed to have no cooking utensil but a small skillet. In this, she first baked the bread, then fried the meat, and finished the supper by making coffee in it.

The General Conference which was held in Baltimore, May, 1816, formed the Missouri Conference, with boundary as follows: "The Missouri Conference shall be bounded by the Ohio Conference on the north, by the Ohio and Mississippi Rivers on the east, and the Arkansas River on the South." There was no western boundary. The delimitation here given is quite vague. It included Indiana and Illinois and anything which might develop west of the Mississippi and north of the Arkansas River. But even the Arkansas River, as a southern boundary, was not ob-

served. At the second session of the conference, we find William Stevenson appointed to Hot Springs, which was sixty miles south of the Arkansas River and, in a little while, we find appointments of the Missouri Conference scattered all over Arkansas and the Indian Territory. But it must be remembered that Missouri Territory, which was formed in 1812, embraced all of the present state of Arkansas and that the southern part of Missouri was erected into the territory of Arkansas in 1819.

Of the development of the work in Arkansas, we give a few notes. The first circuit named in Arkansas was Spring River, so called from the stream which heads in Mammoth Spring near the town of Thayer on our southern border. Dr. Horace Jewell, author of "Methodism in Arkansas," tells us that this circuit was formed in 1815 and supplied by Eli Lindsey, who traveled extensively in North Arkansas. He relates how, while preaching in the cabin of Mr. Reid, where Batesville now stands, the service was suddenly turned into a bear chase. The bear was soon killed and the service resumed. Phillip David, whose name is already familiar to us among the Missouri preachers, was appointed

to this circuit the next year at the first session of the Missouri Conference, and William Stevenson was sent to Hot Springs. We cannot follow the history of this part of the work. A few notes must suffice. In 1819, we find a Black River District in Arkansas; after two years the name is changed to Arkansas District. As presiding elders of this district, we find the names of William Stevenson, John Scripps, Jesse Hale, and Uriel Haw, especially familiar to us in our early work in Missouri. Little Rock District appears in 1832 and the same year the Creek and Cherokee missions indicate the work among the Indians. In 1835, the Arkansas Conference was organized. It included Arkansas, North Louisiana, the Indian Territory and the Sulphur Fork country of Texas.

We may judge from the long distance which the Arkansas preachers had to travel to reach the session of the Missouri Conference that few of them attended. The conference for 1835, the year before the division, was held at Arrow Rock camp ground. A note from Dr. Hunter, in the Arkansas Methodist, says: "The only representative from the Arkansas part of the work was William P. Ratcliffe, a young man who had been

transferred from Tennessee, and who had just closed his first year west of the river. His presiding elder had intrusted him with all his papers, and he made the journey of three or four hundred miles on horseback and discharged the duties imposed upon him as well as if he had been a veteran of a score of years." That was the last time that the work in Arkansas was represented on the floor of the Missouri Conference. The formation of the Illinois Conference in 1825 had taken from the Missouri Conference all of its territory east of the Mississippi River. The creation of the Arkansas Conference in 1835 limited its work southward to the southern line of the State. In 1844, the Indian Mission Conference was formed. After this, the Missouri Conference was almost wholly confined to the State of Missouri. The division of this territory into two conferences, one north and the other south of the Missouri River, came in 1845, and, in 1870, the part south of the Missouri River, called the St. Louis Conference, was divided, forming the Southwest Missouri Conference out of its western section.

CHAPTER III

Planting Methodism in St. Louis

THE Methodists were slow to establish the Church in St. Louis. The Baptists, Presbyterians and Episcopalians preceded them. Fifteen years elapsed from the time when John Travis, under episcopal appointment, began the regular itinerant work of the Church on Missouri Circuit before there was even a serious effort made to plant the Methodist Church in St. Louis. Yet, St. Louis was the capital of Missouri Territory and its largest town. It was, also, geographically, the center of Methodist operations. But the Missouri Conference had been formed in 1816 and extended its operations to the chief settlements, from Iowa down into Arkansas, and was represented by three presiding elder's districts and twenty pastoral charges, and still there was no Methodist society in St. Louis, nor even a preaching place, although the Church had, at least, two hundred preaching places in Missouri. The explanation of this is in the fact that the majority of the people in St. Louis were foreigners and Catholics, and

the boys, who constituted the rank and file of the Methodist itineracy, preferred to give their services to settlements which were, at least, Protestant in spirit, and welcomed their ministry. I may also venture to suggest that those denominations which allow their pastors to lay plans which they may follow up through a succession of years are better prepared than the Methodists for siege operations.

Siege was laid in 1820 to establish the Methodist Church in St. Louis, by a man well qualified for the task. But there were some circumstances and incidents precedent which are worth relating.

The first English newspaper published in Missouri Territory was the *Missouri Gazette.* The first number of this paper was issued July 12, 1808. It was edited and printed by Joseph Charless. Mr. Charless was a native of Ireland, who had been brought to Christ by the preaching of John Wesley. Charless was a devout Christian and a staunch Methodist. In addition to his work as editor and publisher of the *Gazette,* this man also kept a hotel. Mr. Whiteside, a Methodist preacher who lodged at the Charless House in passing through the city, heard Mr. Charless holding prayer with his family before retiring to bed.

He reported the circumstance to John Scripps, then on the Coldwater Circuit. Scripps sought out Mr. Charless and found him quite ready to assist in the scheme to organize a Methodist Church in the city. Mr. Scripps made an appointment to preach in the theater every third Sunday evening. Mr. Charless published the appointment in the *Gazette* and backed up the movement by his personal influence. He had Mr. Scripps hold prayer meeting at his house. To this he invited a few of his especial friends. Among these are mentioned Mrs. Bradley, an elderly Baptist lady, and Mrs. Sullivan, the wife of the jailor. The theater referred to is described as a dilapidated log house, but Scripps reports that he had good congregations. Not long after Scripps began this work, Mr. Giddings, a Presbyterian preacher, who had bought a frame house in which he taught school, and preached on Sunday, invited Mr. Scripps to change his appointment to his house, which invitation was gladly accepted.

At the conference, Mr. Scripps was appointed to Boonslick Circuit. He says he obtained permission of Mr. Giddings to place the St. Louis appointment on the plan of Coldwater Circuit, but his successor, Mr.

Hale, did not continue the work in the city. No society had been organized and the Methodists owned no place of worship.

The fifth session of the Missouri Conference was held at Shiloh meetinghouse, St. Clair County, Illinois, September, 1820, Bishop Roberts presiding at this conference. Jesse Walker was appointed Conference Missionary, with especial reference to the work in Missouri. At once he set his heart on establishing the church in the city of St. Louis.

It is said that Jesse Walker's plan of campaign was to strike St. Louis with a rousing revival, and to this end he fixed upon a date when two other preachers should meet him and join in the work. The three met on the day appointed. The Legislature was in session. Places of entertainment were crowded. None seemed to know or care for the preachers. They knew not how to begin. They rode together into the public square and held a consultation on horseback. There was clearly no need for the two helpers. They decided to retreat at once and did so. Brother Walker, it is said, also concluded to seek another field. Some say he started to go to Mississippi. But, when he had got about eighteen miles from the city he turned aside to pray, then

set his face to return, feeling rebuked and humiliated for his lack of faith and courage. Others say that it was in a patch of Jimson weeds near where the old courthouse now stands that Jesse Walker sought in prayer the divine guidance and emerged from the struggle fully resolved to establish the church in St. Louis.

Mr. Walker, in beginning his work, held service the first two Sundays in a place of worship belonging to the Baptists. Then he rented an unfinished dwelling—a log house with two rooms. One room he prepared for school and church service; the other he used as his dwelling place. Mr. Walker had a farm in Illinois where his family remained. He relied upon his farm as a base of supplies. The method of a siege became his plan of campaign.

It is said that only ten persons came on the first Sunday to hear Mr. Walker preach. He was sick in bed, and they held a prayer meeting. But in a few weeks the Sunday congregation was all the room would hold.

Robert D. Sutton and Thomas Essex, both stewards in the First Methodist Church at Eighth Street and Washington Avenue during this writer's pastorate there in 1878-79,

were charter members of Mr. Walker's Sunday School, and Mr. Sutton thus reports it:

> "The school was opened by singing one verse of the hymn, 'Children of the Heavenly King.' Mr. Walker offered prayer. Then he organized his school. There were only ten children present, all boys, and just half the little company did not know their A, B, C's. He made teachers of all who could read, or spell. Then he began to call first one and then another of them who were teachers, and to give each religious instruction and advice. This continued for an hour and a half. Then Mr. Walker said the school must close. He asked all to come again next Sunday and bring as many new scholars as they could. He made a short talk, sang one verse of 'Jesus My All to Heaven Is Gone,' offered prayer and dismissed. This was on the third Sunday in May, 1821."

The organization of the society of the first Methodist Church in St. Louis was in January, 1821, and the charter members, according to Rev. John Hogan, were A. Burns and wife, John Finney, John Armstrong, Mr. Hoyt and Mr. Piggott, John Goodfellow and his mother and sister, and a lady whose name is not given, whom Goodfellow afterwards married.

During the summer of 1821, Mr. Walker

held a camp meeting out on the St. Charles Road, seven miles north of the city, and, as a result, added to the Church a number of members whose work is now historic in St. Louis Methodism. Among these were William Finney, brother of John Finney, and father of the late Thomas M. Finney, D.D.; also the sister of William Finney, Mrs. Kells, whose daughter became the wife of Samuel Cupples.

At the close of the year, Mr. Walker reported to the conference that the Methodist Church in St. Louis had eighty-seven members.

The sixth annual session of the Missouri Conference was held at McKendree Chapel, Cape Girardeau County, Missouri, October 21, 1822, Bishop R. R. Roberts presiding, John Scripps, secretary. At this conference, Jesse Walker was appointed to St. Louis station and it was voted to hold the next conference there.

At the beginning of his second year's work in St. Louis, Mr. Walker found it necessary to secure a larger house in which to worship. He obtained permission to use the Courthouse. But, under pressure of their great need and in view of entertaining the conference, the

congregation resolved to build a church. Brother Piggott, who owned a farm up the river, gave timber for the lumber. The logs were rafted to St. Louis and sawed by hand. Men donated work, and a house of worship 20 by 30 feet was erected on the corner of Fourth and Myrtle Streets, and there the conference was held October 22, 1822, Bishop Roberts presiding; and again October 23, 1823, Bishop McKendree presiding—John Scripps, secretary, at each session.

John Scripps served the Church in the regular work about thirty years. He settled at Rushville, Illinois, where, in 1843, he wrote, for the *Western Christian Advocate* the account of his itinerant labors reproduced in these sketches.

CHAPTER IV

Reports from the Field

John Scripps' Reports, Coldwater Circuit in 1817

"My entrance on Coldwater Circuit was met with discouragements, arising from the migratory spirit of the Western pioneers, who always have a better country in view some hundreds of miles nearer the setting sun, of which an extract from my journal will furnish proof.

"Tuesday, October 15, I rode to Brother D. Hodges. He has been some weeks at Boonslick, one hundred and eighty miles higher up the river, preparing for the removal of his family thither.

"Wednesday, the 16th—Brother Thomas Hatton, leader of a class of thirty-nine members, of whom eighteen are preparing to move to Boonslick, returned home to-day from that country, where he has been several weeks, building a house to move to.

"Thursday, the 17th—At B. Proctor's. All in a bustle, preparing to move to Boonslick.

"Friday, the 18th—At Brother William Long's, leader of Bonhomme Class. Long absent at Boonslick, exploring country in anticipation of moving there. I rode to Brother Oaf's—

a preaching place. He has been some weeks from home in quest of a new country. I left an appointment; went six miles to Brother S. Richardson, class leader—gone with his cattle to Boonslick preparatory to moving.

"Yet, notwithstanding the diminutions and derangements of the work, we had some precious seasons through the year, and some conversions and accessions to the church.

"On New Year's Day I procured the attendance of a tolerable congregation of French Catholics, at the Widow Bowles', on whose hearts the word seemed to have a powerful effect, and at the conclusion they gave me their hands in covenant to seek heartfelt religion after the manner I had proposed, and further, that they would regularly attend preaching. But subsequent threatening of the anathemas of the church, by the priest at Vide Poche, deterred them, with one exception, from coming again. The exception was Baptiste Onori, who opened his doors for preaching, got me to baptize his youngest child, embraced religion and, as I learned since, held out to the end, and died in the faith. This was the second case of the conversion of a French Catholic in Missouri; the first was of a woman under the ministry of Thomas Wright.

"In extending my work westward, into what was afterwards called Abouf Circuit, a girl, J. W., twelve years of age, whose father, a widower, was away all winter, invited me to preach at her

house; but at my fourth appointment he had returned, and he closed his doors against me. I procured another house and continued my appointments. After preaching I proposed to hold something like a class meeting, with as many as chose to stay in—a course which I frequently pursued in new places, and with the best of results. Eight or ten stayed in, this young girl, J. W., among the rest. On speaking to her I found her under deep conviction. I proposed praying for her, and for as many more in the room as desired it. All came forward and knelt down; but I had hardly begun to pray before the door was burst open by those outside, who crowded in, and the benches were directly filled with mourners. The power of the Lord was present to heal. Several were made to shout redeeming love; such a time I scarcely ever witnessed.

"I founded a large class here, where an hour before there appeared but little prospect of doing any good. J. W. joined, but her father, a Baptist, who remained out of doors, forbade her his house, and would not even suffer her to go home for her clothes. But she continued faithful, as I believe did all the rest.

"July 9, 1817, at my appointment at Onories, on the Meramec River, I received a letter from Jesse Walker, dated Spring River, about three hundred miles southwest, June 30, requiring my attendance at Cape Girardeau on the 12th instant. I purchased a canoe and within an hour

was descending the stream. One of the darkest nights I ever saw soon closed in upon me, till, about eleven o'clock, when arriving within six or eight miles of the Mississippi, where high waters arrested the current of the Meramec, I drove, suddenly, into a scene of enchantment. The luxurious foliage of almost impervious brushwood, entangled vines, thickly studded with large forest trees on each side, throwing their great arms across the stream, and intermingling high over head, embowering the narrow channel of the river, all rendered indistinctly visible, only by the luminous gyrations of innumerable millions of fireflies, whose reflection in the stream below was in proportion to their height above. It seemed as if my little boat floated through a black tunnel touching nothing, but borne upon the air through upper ether and surrounding flying sparks. The scene was so unique and so inspirational of indescribable feelings that I can find no just expression of it.

"About one o'clock I landed, struck up a fire and encamped for the remainder of the night on the first island in the Mississippi below the mouth of the Meramec. On Saturday morning about daybreak I arrived on the camp ground near Cape Girardeau."

Scripps was summoned to Cape Girardeau as one of a committee on a church trial which took place during a camp meeting there. He

gives no account of the meeting, except to say it was very successful. Scripps continues:

"Monday, July 14, 1817, I started to a camp meeting on Missouri Circuit, in company with Jesse Walker. Passing through my own circuit, Coldwater, we arrived at the camp ground on Friday, the 18th, after riding a distance of one hundred and sixty miles. Brother John Schroeder was in charge here. The Lord abundantly blessed the labors of His servants at this meeting. Many never closed their eyes in sleep during the entire night, while the surrounding forest was rendered vocal by the praises of the Lord.

"From this, with the addition of Brother Schroeder to our company, we started for another camp meeting, at Boonslick, which, following the circuitous trace then traveled, lay one hundred and sixty miles westward, up the Missouri River. We had to camp out two nights on our way. The large prairies were infested with flies, which rendered them impassable in the daytime, and we always found the borders of the prairies thronged with travelers, waiting for the night. We were provided against the flies with an ointment not generally known, which prevented their attacks. We therefore entered Grand Prairie, estimated to be twenty-five miles across, with impunity, about ten o'clock in the morning. Three high-spirited fellows, from among the campers, who were waiting for the night, swore they would not be outdone by Methodist preach-

ers, and in about an hour they started after us, but they paid dearly for their temerity in the loss of three valuable horses. They passed us a little beyond the middle of the prairie, singly, and at full speed, and about one-fourth of a mile apart, the fleetest horse foremost, all covered on every exposed part with flies, adhering with the most inflexible tenacity, the horses streaming with sweat and gore and tormented beyond endurance.

"On arriving at our destination we found the people had almost renounced the idea of a camp meeting, on account of the general scarcity of provisions; but, aware of a boat having left St. Louis with provisions for this country, and it being about time it should arrive, we raised some money among ourselves and dispatched a man to the landing, who providentially arrived in time to purchase the first barrel of flour and one hundred pounds of bacon; and so we had our camp meeting. A large table was erected on forks. The cooking and serving were put under the superintendence of a good brother and sister. Many of the sisters in the vicinity brought vegetables, milk, honey, butter, etc., and we all ate in common.

"At this meeting we had double duties to perform. There were neither pastures nor provender for our horses, so we hobbled them out in the surrounding woods, where, being disposed to wander in quest of better range, Brother Schroeder and myself had to pay unremitting

attention to the sound of their bells, and every two or three hours, both day and night, we had to pursue them through briars and luxurious foliage, with which the woods abounded, and bring them back to the borders of the encampment, there to leave them, with the comfortable assurance of a short respite in the more congenial work at the altar, again to repeat our wearying labor in keeping the horses.

"The congregation at the meeting was large. The work was great, its effects general and every characteristic inspiring. The services at the pulpit and altar had scarcely any intermission, day or night. Such a time of divine power I have scarcely witnessed elsewhere. Our greatest privation was the scarcity of water. A small spring, issuing from a bank, through a bark spout, in a stream about as thick as a rye straw, in a time of drought, and beneath the scorching fervor of the July sun was the sole supply of the camp. For our ablutions we had a stagnant, sun-heated pond, some distance away.

"On Monday morning, after the closing services, we mounted and retraced our steps to the Coldwater camp meeting, about twelve miles north of St. Louis. About sunset we arrived at Grand Prairie and, having exhausted our ointment, were obliged to avail ourselves of night travel and, as Brother Walker, who had control of the party, would not waste daylight in sleep, we continued on. One of our company complained much of fatigue and thought we ought to

rest. We continued, however, until nearly noon. A small stream of water tempted us to make a cup of coffee. While here a United States officer of the army, riding by, alone, was invited to partake with us. The complaining brother immediately inundated him with questions relative to the difficulties before us, and which he had just passed through; to all of which the gentleman replied to the effect they were not so bad, so disagreeable, so insurmountable, etc., but that they might be worse. Nor were they worse than any reasonable man might expect to meet with in an uninhabited country; that we must not look in a wilderness for comforts of civilization, etc. When again on our way Brother Walker observed: 'Well, brother, if you are not ashamed, I am, of the strange anomaly of a soldier fighting for perishable honors, but enduring hardness as a good soldier and rebuking the unreasonable repinings of a soldier of the cross, shrinking from his own shadow. Why, if the Lord would convert, call to the ministry, and give us a dozen such soldiers as that man, I feel we could soon convert the world.'

"That night we lay at Camp Branch, our first repose since leaving the camp ground, one hundred and fifty miles away. Camp Branch, at this time of extensive drought, was but a filthy mud hole, the haunt of a large herd of cattle, which were, all night, literally ravenous after a few articles of our apparel, on which we pillowed our heads, compelling us to exchange sleep for a

race to recover our garments from their voracious jaws. In the morning, after a daylight view of the fountain of our last night's beverage, which produced an effect on our stomachs like an emetic, and which I could not contemplate without thinking with Shakespeare 'the art of our necessities is strange that can make vile things precious,' we started on our journey and, in a state of profuse perspiration, stopped about eleven o'clock on the bank of Shawet Creek and made coffee for breakfast. While it was preparing Brother Walker slept, but to men who had been so long deprived of their accustomed ablutions as Brother Schroeder and myself, the cool, translucent water was too tempting to resist. We plunged in, and for the delicious enjoyment of that hour would gladly have sacrificed the most tempting breakfast on earth; and we did forfeit it, for the effect was instantaneous. Our appetites were gone, high fever succeeded and during the Coldwater camp meeting, which began on Friday, August 1, Brother Schroeder lay at Brother Holland's, his life almost despaired of, and I, though still able to travel, unable to participate in the deeply interesting services of the meeting.

"Brother Hallie had crossed from the Illinois Circuit to our assistance. He and a Cumberland Presbyterian preacher were all the aid Brother Walker had. Nor did that indefatigable veteran abate one iota of his accustomed labors; but, in default of his two arms, as he called the two

invalids, he rather exceeded his accustomed activity. Here let it be observed that I am thus circumstantial in this narrative, not because I regard such events peculiar to Methodist itinerants, yet they characterized the early experiences of the founders of the church, and they may have a permanent interest in comparison with the conditions of later times. But, above all, as they present the efficient work of Jesse Walker in its true light, I insert them."

The Work of Samuel G. Patterson

A prominent man for some years in the Missouri Conference was Samuel G. Patterson, in reference to whom we quote from W. S. Woodard's "Annals of Methodism in Missouri" the following summary of facts:

"Samuel G. Patterson began his ministry in Ohio in 1832; came to Missouri in 1834, and was sent to Bowling Green two years; 1836 to Monticello; 1837 St. Louis Circuit; 1838 Meramec; 1839 located; 1840 Sarcoxie, two years; 1842 Okopoh Mission, six years; 1849 Cherokee District, two years; 1851 Crawford Seminary; 1852 located.

"After his location Mr. Patterson settled on Spring River, Jasper County, Mo., and built a fine flouring mill, where I found him, a local preacher, when I was on the Carthage Circuit. Of course, he had to leave there during the

war. He moved to Kentucky, not far from Paducah, where he still lives. Rev. W. M. Patterson, D.D., superintendent of Mexican Mission is his son." (This record was made in 1892.)

Mr. Patterson was a man of great energy and devotion. We find this summary of his year's work for 1833 in Ohio: "Twenty mountains to cross and three hundred miles' ride every four weeks; twenty-six appointments to fill each round; three hundred ninety accessions to the church; twenty-two dollars salary; the happiest year of my life."

Mr. Patterson entered the Missouri Conference in 1834 and thus speaks of it: "The Missouri Conference at that time embraced all the country west of the Mississippi River from Louisiana to Iowa, and westward to the Rocky Mountains, as far as Methodist missionaries had been able to penetrate the country."

Patterson tells how he traveled from Bellevue, where the conference was held, to his first appointment, which was the Bowling Green Circuit, St. Louis District, Andrew Monroe, presiding elder. On his way he passed through St. Louis and stopped at the commission house of John and William Fin-

ney, on the levee, and spent Sunday as the guest of Mrs. Collier at St. Charles. The next night he stayed at the house of Brother Pitman, father of David K. Pitman, afterwards a distinguished member of the Methodist Church at Cottleville, Mo. He reached his charge and preached his first sermon in Missouri at the house of Daniel Draper in Auburn, Lincoln County, Sunday, September 27, 1834.

Mr. Patterson has this to say of his charge:

"To fill the appointments on this circuit the preacher had to travel about one hundred and seventy-five miles every round. The circuit embraced all of Pike County; a large portion of Ralls; a part of Montgomery and of Lincoln, and extended from near Troy on the south, to New London and Salt River on the north, and from Clarksville on the Mississippi to near Middletown in Montgomery. The regular preaching places were Bowling Green, Auburn, Paynesville, Clarksville, Louisiana, Frankfort and New London—seven towns. Besides these, Buffalo Knob, Wells, Republican meetinghouse, Ashley, Ingraims, Indian Creek, James', Blankenship's, Tom Ely's, Jacob Kribaum's, Fuqua's, Trimble's, Buffalo meetinghouse, Gregory's Creek, Stradley's, Dig's and William Taylor's—sixteen country appointments; twenty-three in all. Besides these, I had some side, irregular appointments;

all of these were filled every twenty-eight days.

"It was our custom to preach twice, and often three times, on Sunday; besides riding several miles to the appointments; and once nearly every day of the week; holding class meeting after preaching every place where we had an organized society. Monday was sometimes left without an appointment and called rest day. Methodist traveling preachers in those days seldom found time to work in the field, shop or store. Presiding elders as well as preachers were itinerants. 'All at work and always at it' was the rule. Andrew Monroe often rode forty miles on horseback at night to fill an appointment.

"There were no Methodist meetinghouses on the circuit, and but two of any kind. They were log houses and called Republican or Union meetinghouses. Preaching was generally at private houses, except at Bowling Green and New London, where we generally preached in the courthouse."

Of his next appointment, Monticello Circuit, Palmyra District, George C. Light, presiding elder, Mr. Patterson writes:

"This circuit was located in a sparsely settled section of country lying between the extreme northeast corner of the State of Missouri and a small portion of Wisconsin Territory (now Iowa). It was bounded on the east by the Mississippi, on the south by the Fabius River,

and on the west by vast prairies and extensive forests. It embraced the counties of Lewis and Clark and a strip of territory in Wisconsin. The towns, all of which were then very new, were Monticello, LaGrange, Tully, St. Francisville, Waterloo, in Missouri, and Farmington, in Wisconsin. The preaching places in the country were Rankin's, McPherson's, Gregory's, Davis Brener's, and Blankenship's. There were eighteen regular appointments and several irregular. Preaching was at private houses, even in the towns, there being no meetinghouses on the circuit.

"The traveling necessary to be done by the preacher in charge, if he turned in to see his family two or three times a month, was about two hundred and twenty-five miles each round.

"The regular work of preaching required nearly every day. Holding the class meetings and reading the general rules were attended to every four weeks.

"In this portion of Missouri the snows fell to the depth of several inches, and the winters were very cold. In 1836, the snow covered the ground in December and it was not seen again till March, and the main road for horses was on the ice of the Des Moines River. It was used for wagons and sleighs from the mouth up as far as there were settlements. Some of my appointments being on or near the river, I traveled to them on horseback on the ice some fifty or sixty miles."

Some of the readers of this sketch will be especially interested in this note from Patterson's letters:

"I well remember the kindness and attention paid me by a bright-eyed boy whose excellent mother's house was a preacher's welcome home, and one of my stopping places, when I was on the Monticello Circuit. He always met me with a smile, his intelligent eye sparkling with pleasure as he took my horse, assuring me he would be well taken care of without attention from me. I loved that boy for his excellent qualities. The last time I visited his mother the little fellow met me at the fence, wearing his stepfather's old blue jeans coat, minus part of the tail, and seemed as happy to see me, in this homely garb, as if he had on his Sunday best. The last time I saw the boy was as a delegate from Missouri to a General Conference, and the brethren called him Dr. William Rush.

"My quarterage was about sixty dollars, for myself, wife and one child. We lived on it very comfortably."

Patterson reports of his work for 1837 on St. Louis Circuit:

"In the fall of 1837, I received my fourth appointment in the Missouri Conference, which was St. Louis Circuit, St. Louis District, Silas Comfort, presiding elder. The distance to remove my family was about one hundred and

fifty miles. Having no furniture, I carried my all in a one-horse carriage. On reaching my circuit, I adopted a plan which worked well for myself, as well as for the circuit. Learning from the plan of the circuit who were the stewards, I drove to the house of one of them—R. Clayton—told him I was the circuit preacher, and wished to place my family in the charge of the stewards to be provided for as they deemed best; that my work would require all my time, so that I should have no leisure to look after their wants. We were cordially welcomed to the hospitalities of his home, and found his excellent family were perfectly familiar with the necessities of Methodist preachers and their families. The next day I took charge of the circuit, and the stewards took charge of my family, making ample provision for them, without my advice or aid.

"The St. Louis Circuit embraced the County of St. Louis—except the city—and a part of an adjoining county. The preaching places were Manchester, Chesterfield, Creve Coeur, Fee Fee Chapel, Coldwater Church, Union Schoolhouse, Gravois Meetinghouse, Brick Schoolhouse, R. Clayton's, Thomas Montague's, Bethel Meetinghouse, Columbia Bottom, Conway's Schoolhouse, Laban Landon's Widow, Hamilton's and others."

There were probably half a dozen more than are here named, but Mr. Patterson says,

"There was not a Methodist meetinghouse in the bounds of the circuit." Fee Fee Chapel belonged to the Baptist Church and was the first church of any denomination in the county, built out of the city. The other meetinghouses, as Mr. Patterson tells us, "were little better than barns and belonged to anybody, everybody and nobody."

Paul writing to the Corinthians concerning a certain matter says, "Being crafty I caught you with guile." So our early preachers were "wise as serpents." Here is an example, Mr. Patterson says, continuing his report from the St. Louis Circuit:

> "In the main, preaching was well attended in every part of the circuit. At Bethel, however (old Bethel south of Labaddie), it seemed impossible to get hearers enough to justify me in continuing the appointment. I had preached to a handful half the year, but few knew whether I could preach or not, as they did not come to hear me. So I resolved to preach their funeral and leave them. I gave notice that, at my next appointment, I would preach a funeral sermon, and desired a large attendance, as it would be an important occasion. I left them with their curiosity up to know whose funeral was to be preached. The word went out and the crowd came in. On finding a large congregation

when I returned, I changed my mind as to whose funeral I would preach, announced my text 'So Job Died,' and stated that, so far as I knew, Job's funeral had not been preached, and that I would proceed at once to preach it. The history of Job being one of much interest to me, I succeeded in delivering a discourse that secured to me a good congregation during the remainder of the year and accessions to the church.

"The presiding elder resided at Manchester, which afforded me opportunity to be often with him and frequently with his family. He was, in the fullest sense, a Christian gentleman. As a citizen he was faultless. In family government he was a model. In the pulpit he was happy in his choice of subjects and selection of language, logical in argument, original in thought, and clear and forcible but mild in delivery. He was never unemployed, never triflingly employed.

"At one of his quarterly meetings, held at Manchester, we protracted the meeting ten days, assisted by John Glanville and John Monroe, resulting in much good to the membership, conversions and accessions to the church, and the building in the town of the first Methodist meetinghouse on the St. Louis Circuit, to the erection of which one of the old, substantial members—Brother Hogg—contributed five hundred dollars. This old brother was a man of limited means, compared with many in the Church, who would think it a

very considerable stretch of benevolence to give five or ten dollars.

"Walker D. Shumate resided in the bounds of my work. He had an amiable family and was, himself, cultivated and refined, diligent, pious and useful in every department of the Church."

The report refers to John Glanville as an able preacher and a pious man and to Brother Holliday, of the Coldwater class—a local preacher as deeply pious, and a "thorough Methodist of the old line," and says he and his estimable wife "were training their children in the way they should go." The preacher held a camp meeting at Creve Coeur, assisted by W. W. Redmond, and a protracted meeting at Fee Fee, assisted by John H. Fielding, president of St. Charles College, and W. D. Shumate. A parsonage was built in the Gravois settlement on land given by Richard Sappington. Mr. Patterson, the preacher, painted it. The report closes:

"This was a year of considerable prosperity. Quarterly meetings were invariably held by the presiding elder in person, fast days observed, sacraments administered, love feasts held with closed doors, hymns lined, singing performed in the congregation with the vocal organs, consequently, with the spirit and with the understand-

ing also, and the Church kneeled to pray. The circuit preacher visited from house to house, circulated religious books, instructed the children and performed other pastoral work indispensable to the growth of Methodism and the spread of scriptural holiness. Leaving my family support entirely with the stewards, they were pleasantly boarded in the family of Mark Sappington and my disciplinary allowance of two hundred and sixteen dollars paid."

Early Labors of Jerome C. Berryman

Among the pioneer Methodist preachers of Missouri, J. C. Berryman was a conspicuous figure. Born in Kentucky, February 22, 1810, he came to Missouri in 1828, and in the fall of the same year was licensed to preach by the quarterly conference of Saline and St. Francois Circuits, and admitted into the Missouri Conference.

His first appointment was the circuit from which he was licensed. The circuit consisted of St. Francois, Ste. Genevieve, Madison, Wayne and Perry counties. He received for the year's service thirty dollars.

In 1829 he was sent to Hot Springs and Mount Prairie, Arkansas, which then belonged to the Missouri Conference. We will

hear Brother Berryman's report from his Hot Springs charge:

"I had been suffering for a week with premonitory symptoms before reaching Mount Prairie settlement, filling week-day appointments meanwhile, and barely able to sit on my horse the day of my reaching the settlement. I felt that my condition was dangerous in the extreme, and my thoughts were much occupied about death. I was not afraid to die, but I was among strangers and far from all my loved ones at home. Besides, I had entered the work of the ministry with large desires and purposes of usefulness. I did not want to die then and there; and as I lay upon my bed, soon after arriving at Brother Shook's, with my face turned to the back of the bed, I was in an agony of prayer, when there appeared to me the figure of a man on the wall, just above my bed and very near me. He spoke to me to the effect that though my sickness should be protracted and severe, it should not be unto death. John Henry, a local preacher of the neighborhood, was in the room. I turned and told him that I was going to have a hard time, but would not die, for God had told me so.

"About four weeks later I was supposed to be dead, and consultation was had in regard to my burial. When I recovered from this sickness I was totally blind, but regained sight gradually, as I regained health and strength. For a long

time after I got up from that sick-bed my mind was more clear and my communion with God more constant than ever before."

At this time Brother Berryman was only twenty years old. His circuit in Arkansas embraced a very large territory. Uriel Haw, his presiding elder, had his home in Missouri. Brother Berryman makes loving mention of him.

"This great and good man finished his work when comparatively young, and no wonder he died young; he acted as one who had adopted as the rule of his life the motto, 'Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might.' The year he was my presiding elder he had for his district the entire territory of Arkansas, while his family lived in Cape Girardeau County, Missouri. My circuit was five hundred miles from his home, yet I think he did not fail to attend any of the quarterly meetings of his district during the year, and he was abundant in labors wherever he went. He died and was buried in Mississippi County, among as good people as may be found anywhere, and his name is like sweet incense to them to this day."

J. C. Berryman was married in 1831 and his appointment was Palmyra, Missouri. He tells us his experience of this year:

"Up to this date the life of a circuit preacher had been, in my case, a pleasant routine of study and work with none to care for but those with whom I stood in pastoral relation; but in addition to these now I had the care of a wife, who had been tenderly reared, and never known want or care. The Church, at that time, allowed no claim for a preacher's wife, until he had traveled four years and graduated to the order of elder. The preacher himself was allowed a salary of only one hundred dollars. Still we might have got along with this had not the presiding elder sent a second preacher to the circuit, in the person of W. A. H. Spratt, a recruit transfer from the Kentucky Conference. The stewards of the circuit said they had not asked for two preachers, nor would they support two. They were satisfied with the one who had been sent to them from the conference, but the other they did not want. However, Spratt and I arranged our work for two, and went on up to the time of the first quarterly conference. This meeting the presiding elder failed to attend. There had been very little money raised for the preachers. I was boarding in Palmyra at considerable expense, and without consulting anyone, I went out into Marion County, bought a piece of land and raised a crop of corn, and so violated the Discipline by leaving my work. In the fall I started to conference with the intention of locating; but meeting with Brother Andrew Monroe, and traveling with him for several days, after giving me a good scolding

for my truancy, he dissuaded me from my purpose to ask the conference for a location."

The work of J. C. Berryman ran far beyond what we consider pioneer days of Methodism in Missouri. He was a Methodist preacher for seventy-eight years. He was a member of the General Conference of 1844. He died May 8, 1906, and is buried at Caledonia, Missouri.

Like most of our pioneer preachers, Brother Berryman had not a school education, but he was a diligent student and attained by his studiousness creditable scholarship. I have his Hebrew Bible, in two volumes, which he gave me fifty years ago. I think he must have bought it when a boy, for it was printed in 1822.

The Work of Jesse Green

The most conspicuous figure in Missouri Methodism from 1824 to 1847 was Jesse Green. W. S. Woodard, in his "Annals of Methodism in Missouri," gives this sketch of him:

"Jesse Green was born in East Tennessee on French Broad River, November 29, 1791. He was born again at Winton's Camp Ground, in 1808, and soon after, when just seventeen years

old, was licensed to exhort by John Bowman.

"From October, 1814, to May, 1815, he served in the army of his country. His license to preach bore the date February 15, 1817, and was signed by John Henniger, presiding elder. At the next session of the Tennessee Conference he was received on trial and appointed to Ash Circuit; 1818, Clinch; 1819, Hartford; 1820, Powel's Valley; 1821, New River, two years; 1823, transferred to Missouri Conference; 1824, Cape Girardeau District, three years; 1827, Boonslick Circuit; 1828, Missouri District, two years; 1830, Arkansas District; 1831, Cape Girardeau District; 1832, Missouri District, four years; 1836, Agent for St. Charles College; 1837, Boonville District; 1838, Lexington District, three years; 1841, Columbia District, three years; 1844, Lexington District, three years; April 18, 1847, New Jerusalem forever."

To understand the above itinerary the reader must be told that when Mr. Green began his work in the Missouri Conference, Cape Girardeau District and Missouri District represented the entire territory of the conference, which then included all of Missouri, Arkansas, Kansas, Indian Territory, and a part of Iowa. Other districts were formed as settlements increased, so that Mr. Green really traversed this vast region again and again. Jesse Green came to know more

of the geography and settlements of the old Missouri Conference than any other man. Mr. Woodard says he was three times elected a delegate to the General Conference, but M. L. Gray, in his "Centennial Volume of Missouri Methodism," says that Green was four times chosen a General Conference delegate from Missouri.

The same year that Jesse Green entered the Missouri Conference, Andrew Monroe entered it by transfer from Kentucky. Mr. Monroe is better known to Methodists of this generation than Mr. Green. He had a much longer term of service, his active ministry running through fifty-six years, forty-six of which were spent in Missouri. He was on districts twenty-eight years, and eleven times a delegate to the General Conference. His service passed beyond what may be called pioneer days. Andrew Monroe died in 1871. As a sketch from earlier days, this letter which he wrote to Jesse Green, then on the Missouri District, 1835, will be of interest. Mr. Monroe was then on the St. Louis District.

"I am now on my third round on the Mississippi tour. I expect to hold quarterly meetings

for Canton at Flint Hills, nearly one hundred miles from Palmyra. Brother Jameson, the preacher in charge of the Canton Circuit, has not yet returned. Brother Stateler is in his place, but very feeble, and the territory is sufficient for two circuits. Clonnigen has gone to Virginia, Brother Glanville is in his place. Nelson Bewley has failed because of ill health; George W. Bewley is yet unable to travel; so you see we are very much crippled."

At the time of writing this, Brother Monroe had under his charge ten preachers in a district embracing one-third of the State of Missouri, and his letter shows half of his working force disabled or absent. He speaks thus of forming a new district:

"I wish you to take into consideration the propriety of forming another district. I cannot say positively what will be the best arrangement, but I have thought it might be well to make a district to embrace Lexington, Arrow Rock, Boonville, Gasconade, and the country south, which is not embraced in the St. Louis District. Then let Missouri District embrace Paris, Columbia, Boonslick, Chariton, Richmond, and Grand River; and still St. Louis will be quite large. I mean this for your reflection. A change of course, must be made in order to embrace the new ground. I have been to the Gasconade and expect to go again. That work must belong to

this, but it lies very remote from this district. I rode two hundred miles to the quarterly meeting, and there are many settlements to the west of that which must be attended to."

The outcome of this discussion about a new district was, that at the conference held in the fall of 1835 the Boonville District was formed—W. W. Redman, presiding elder; Independence and Lexington, B. R. Johnson and W. P. Hulse; Arrow Rock, J. K. Lacy; Boonville, J. Prior; Osage, A. Millice; Gasconade, J. W. Ewing; Green, H. G. Jopling; Seneca, to be supplied.

This Seneca, it seems, was named after the Seneca Indians, and Constantine F. Dryden was engaged to supply it. We quote from a letter of Mr. Dryden to W. S. Woodard, and published in his "Annals of Methodism in Missouri":

"In February, 1836, I left my father's in Daviess County, for Seneca, Mo., which lay mostly in Barry County. Barry then included what is now Barton, Jasper, Newton, McDonald, and Barry counties. I also had appointments in the Quawpaw and Seneca nations, and preached at Maysville, Ark. The distance around the mission was three hundred miles, and I traveled it every three weeks."

W. S. Woodard himself had charge of this circuit, as it was sixteen years later, and thus describes it: "Beginning at Doniphan, I went down Current River to the Arkansas line, thence up Little Black River to the old military road, thence to Scott's, on Cane Creek, thence to Poplar Bluff, thence up Big Black River to Copeland's, thence to Shiloh, on Cane Creek, thence up the Creek to Hull's, thence to Kirby's, on Ten Mile, thence to Ebenezer, on Little Black, thence to the mouth of Buffalo, on Current River, thence to Ponder's, on Furche de Man, thence to Doniphan, one hundred and thirty miles and twenty-eight appointments."

A pretty good circuit, this, but we see it was less than half the original circuit traveled in 1836 by Mr. Dryden.

CHAPTER V

The Preacher's Salary

From the organization of the Church in 1784 to 1800, the salary of the preacher was sixty-four dollars a year. This was for every one alike. There was no difference between the claim of the bishop and that of the last boy admitted into the Conference. In 1792, traveling expenses were added to this allowance, which means that the preacher's actual expense in moving to his new appointment was made a charge upon the work. From 1800 to 1816, the preacher's salary was raised to eighty dollars, and, if married, eighty dollars was added for his wife, and children up to seven years old were allowed sixteen dollars each, and from seven to fourteen were allowed twenty-four dollars each. In 1816, the salary was raised to one hundred dollars and the same for wife. Still salaries were alike for all and were not fixed by the stewards but by the Discipline. Bishop Asbury served the Church thirty-two years in the Episcopal office and his salary was never more than eighty dollars a year.

But these meager claims of the preachers were not paid. A scheme to equalize them, as far as possible, was adopted, as follows: from the time that the Publishing House, or Book Concern, was established, it was ordered that its net profits should be turned over to the Conference to aid in the support of superannuated preachers and widows and orphans of deceased preachers. There was also a small endowment known as the Chartered Fund, the proceeds of which were turned over to the Conference. To these items was added a public collection taken by all the preachers and called "The Conference Collection," which was taken up to Conference, and often a collection was taken from the Conference when assembled. This money was put in the hands of a Committee of the Conference and, when the preachers all had reported their receipts, the Committee estimated the total deficits and what per cent of the same the funds in their hands would pay, and fixed a basis of settlement which would be a uniform pro rata of claims.

These settlements show that, on an average, when salaries were as low as eighty dollars a year, the preacher did not receive as much as two-thirds of his claim, though in his report

he counted, as cash, socks, knitted by the farmers' wives, coonskins and anything that could be put to use.

The Missouri Conference held at McKendree Church near Cape Girardeau, in September, 1826, settled with all the preachers on a basis of twenty-four dollars for single and forty-eight dollars for married preachers for their year's work; and, at the Conference of 1833, held at Mountain Spring, Arkansas, settlement was made on the basis of 34 per cent of the claims.

In illustration of the contributions for the support of the ministry in pioneer days, we take the following from "The Rise of Methodism in the West," by W. W. Sweet. The record shows that two preachers were on the circuit; one, we suppose, a local helper, or engaged but a short time. The items are copied from the year's entries in the book of the recording steward:

To cash received from Lewis' class	$ 0.50
To cash received from Curtis' class ..	.50
To cash received from Connerville class	2.50
To cash received from Abbott's class ..	1.00
To cash received from Hardy's class ..	.87½
Bridle leather from Hardy's class	.62½
Cash from Tullie's class	1.25

Shoe leather and corn from Tullie's class	1.75
Cash from Lower's class	2.56½
One pair of shoe soles from Lower's	.50
Cash from Robert's class	4.65
Cash from Hardy's class	.75
2½ yards of linsey from Hardy's	1.12½
Cash from Abbott's class	1.32
Cash from Curtis' class	.50
7 yards of linen from Curtis'	.75
One small pair shoes from Curtis'	1.00
2½ yards of linsey from Alley's	1.25
3¾ yards of linen from Alley's	1.25
8¾ yards of linsey from Lewis'	3.27
1 pair of socks from Lewis' class	.43¾
Cash from Griggs' class	6.75
Total	$35.11¾

The quarterage was applied as follows:

By cash to A. Cummins, traveling expense	$ 0.50
By cash, J. Harens, traveling expense	1.50
To A. Cummins' allowance	3.75
To J. Harens' allowance	30.37½
Total	$36.12½

From a letter of Bishop Asbury, written to Dr. Coke, from New York, dated March 30, 1808, we take the following extract relating to the financial status of Methodism in

America (The letter is printed in the *Methodist Magazine,* London):

> "We have about six hundred preachers on the minutes and our funds and collections yield us six or seven thousand dollars a year. We have never attempted to raise anything but the quarterage, eighty dollars, to single men, the same to married men, and the same to their wives. Nevertheless, every Conference in the Union is insolvent. Last year our New England Conference was delinquent three thousand dollars. We have to thrust out several of our preachers into the extremities, and some preachers and their wives have to draw almost their whole salary from the Conferences.
>
> "Last year we had to send six missionaries nine hundred miles, through the help of a voluntary collection from the Western Conference. We gave only ten dollars to each of the missionaries, who had five or six hundred miles to travel through the Indian country.
>
> "My dividend is twenty-five dollars from each of the seven Conferences, to meet my quarterage and all my expenses."

The reader will understand that "quarterage" means regular salary.

CHAPTER VI

A Basket of Fragments

Abraham Millice—A Unique Character

Pioneer conditions invite to independence in action and the development of individuality. This is especially true of public leaders, such as preachers and politicians. A reputation for uniqueness of character was an advertisement which proved a drawing card for congregations in the case of many of the early preachers. Lorenzo Dow and Peter Cartright were notable examples.

Abraham Millice was a stout, sedate-looking, serious-mannered Dutchman and a bachelor, who served many circuits in Missouri from 1834 to 1858. He was a man of good attainments for the times, was considered a good preacher, and especially shrewd to manage any situation which might be sprung upon him suddenly. He was very droll without seeming to know it. He did not tell jokes or amusing stories, and seemed embarrassed when his drolleries provoked mirth

in others. Millice was often at our house when I was a boy.

I went with Millice from our house, on Sunday morning, to his appointment at a schoolhouse on the prairie. About thirty people came to worship—farmers and their wives. I remember the preacher at one point said, "These cattle on the prairie are not your cattle; they are the Lord's cattle. If the Lord were hungry he would come down and eat up one of your steers, and ask you nothing about it." The other boys and I laughed at the ludicrous picture. Millice stared at us reprovingly and said, "You needn't laugh. It's in the Book: 'I know all the fowls of the mountains and the cattle on a thousand hills are mine; if I were hungry I would not tell thee.'" Millice was a fundamentalist and a literalist when it came to Scripture. On another occasion he was describing the judgment in very vivid colors, and closed with the quotation from Revelations: "And the Kings of the earth and the great men, and the rich men, and the chief captains, and the mighty men, and every bondman and every freeman hid themselves in the dens and the rocks of the mountains; and said to the mountains and rocks, 'Fall on us and hide us from the face

of him that sitteth upon the throne and from the wrath of the Lamb; for the great day of his wrath is come and who shall be able to stand?'" Clapping his hands like the crack of a pistol he shouted: "If a mountain was to fall on a sinner, I'd like to know what good that would do him? The Lord would blow and blast a thousand years but he would get him out."

W. H. Lewis gives this sketch of Millice from Rev. J. B. Landreth:

> "Once, when traveling among the Ozarks, Millice stopped at a house near the mouth of Upper Spring Creek. When time came to retire the landlord told Millice where to sleep. 'Sir,' said the preacher, 'can't we have prayer before we go to bed?' 'No,' said the landlord, 'we don't have any such d——d foolishness about here.' Millice replied quietly, 'Well, sir, we will have it here this evening.' The man said, 'This is my house and I expect to control it.' Millice answered, 'I will pray with you and your family this evening if I have to whip you. I'll show you what a Dutchman can do. You are a pretty fellow to be bringing up a family without prayer; kneel down and pray or I'll thrash you.' So he made the man and his family kneel down while he offered prayer. Next morning he prayed with the family again, and went on his way rejoicing. Millice died in 1859."

The Old-Time Housekeeping

From Dr. McAnally's "Methodism in Missouri," we give this picture of the home of the settler in 1812, as described by Bishop Thomas A. Morris from his recollections written in 1852.

When a young couple commenced housekeeping a very small outfit sufficed, not merely to render them comfortable, but to place them on an equality with their friends and neighbors. They needed a log cabin, covered with clapboards, and floored with slabs—in western parlance called puncheons—and the openings between the logs closed with billets of wood and crammed with mortar to keep all warm and dry; all of which a man could erect himself, without mechanical training, with one day's assistance from his neighbors to raise the logs. Usually one room answered for parlor, sitting room, dining room, kitchen and dormitory, while the potato hole, under the puncheons, formed by excavating the earth for mortar, was the substitute for a cellar. As to furniture, they had a stationary corner cupboard, formed of upright and transverse pieces of wood, so as to form an upper, lower and middle shelf, to hold tableware and eatables. In order to have comfort and con-

venience it was requisite to have one poplar slab table, two poplar or oak rail bedsteads, supplied with suitable bedding, and covered with cross-barred homemade counterpanes, one of which was for the accommodation of visitors; six split-bottom chairs, one long bench, and a few three-legged stools were sufficient for themselves and friends, half a dozen pewter plates, as many knives and forks, tin cups and pewter spoons for ordinary use, and the same number of delft plates, cups and saucers for special occasions; also one dish large enough to hold a piece of pork, bear meat, or venison, with turnips, hominy or stewed pumpkin. All this tableware was kept in the corner cupboard, and so adjusted as to show off to the best advantage, and indicate that the family was well fixed for comfortable living.

When the weather was too cold to have the door or window open, the window being without glass and closed with a board shutter, sufficient light to answer the purpose came down the broad chimney, and saved the expense of glass lights. As for andirons, two large stones served as a good substitute. Everything kept clean and sweet, all presented an air of competence and comfort to

the happy inmates. The cooking was generally done in the presence of the family but was soon dispatched, when the oven and skillet were nicely cleaned and stowed away under the cupboard, the long-handled frying pan was hung upon a nail or peg on one side of the door, and the water pail was placed on a shelf on the other side with the neat water gourd hanging by it. For mantel ornaments they had the tin grater, used for grating off the new corn for mush, before it was hard enough to grind, and the corn splitter, a piece of deer's horn, very useful in parting large ears of corn from the cob. The parlor walls were decorated by the surplus garments and sundry clothes of the family, hung around on nails or wooden pins. New clothes were the sure tokens of prosperity.

If the proprietor owned an ax, iron wedge, hoe, plow, and a pony, a bit of ground to cultivate, and a few mechanic's tools, he asked no more. If the wife had a spinning wheel, a pair of cards to card wool, a loom, and plenty of raw material of flax, wool and cotton, she was content.

In those days keeping her own house was a small part of a woman's work. It was just a little break in her regular employment, for

she carded the wool or cotton, spun, wove, colored, cut and made the family clothing. Ladies of the first respectability, then, vied with each other in manufacturing the finest and most beautiful drapes for themselves, and for their daughters, sons and husbands. In these homemade clothes they appeared abroad with more exquisite pleasure than the people now do in imported satin and broadcloth, and with far more credit to themselves and honor to their country.

For coloring matter the women used the bark of walnut, hickory, maple and sycamore trees, together with copperas, indigo, sumac, paint stone, etc., and in carding for a family suit of mixed they worked in scraps of colored flannel and silk to variegate the texture.

Those were the days of pure republicanism, true patriotism and real independence. All the money a man needed was enough to pay his tax and buy salt and iron. When he needed marketing he gathered fruit from his orchard, vegetables from his garden, and took a pig from his pen or a lamb from his flock; or if he had neither pig nor lamb he took his gun and brought in wild meat from the woods. He raised his own breadstuff and ground it on his hand mill, or pounded it in a

mortar with a sweep and pestle, and relished it better for his toil in preparing it.

Coffee was not then used except by a few, and that on special occasions. For tea they had sage, spicewood, mountain birch and sassafras.

A Side Light on St. Louis Methodism in 1831

Joseph Edmondson, pastor of St. Louis Station, wrote to Jesse Green, presiding elder of Arkansas District, under date May 18, 1831:

> "I can assure you that it is a task to write at this time as I do not like to send bad news; and I have little that is good. I wish it were otherwise, but you may be well satisfied that we are low at this time and looking for still worse than the present trials. May the Lord deliver us out of them all. For this I think some are praying, and we hope the God of Methodism will appear and save us from final ruin, to which I sometimes think we are hastening. I can assure you that of late the congregations are small and things are, as I think, wearing a gloomy aspect.
>
> "The class leaders at the Leaders' meetings report that not one-half of the members attend. Some are discouraged; some are unfeeling and

the end of all is only known to the Lord. I have felt at times bound to leave the place and let things rest until next year; but I do not like to destroy myself for the sake of others, as self-preservation is the first law of nature and I now think I shall do just as well as I can and leave all unto the Lord and the church until the next year. I think I shall locate at the next Conference, unless some great change should take place in my mind and feelings before that time. However, I hope I shall do the will of God; if that should be to live in the Conference I will make the trial of it.

"Dear brother, this has been a year of trials for me. I have had them in more ways than one. Yes, my friends and foes have united to destroy me (Lord, help!). I have, however, as in days before, come thus far, and I will make one effort more. I am determined to do better, live better and be more useful. I have seen some of the leading members here, as I think, much dissatisfied and it is thought by some if the radicals were here at this time there would be a division. I think not, however, but I do not think it would be an injury to the church, at this time, for them to come and take some, if any would go. We have had much hard feeling and much has been said to provoke it.

"I made one round on Brother McAllister's district and he preached on the sale and use of ardent spirits. Some of our members sell or deal in it largely, some of the first members.

This, as you may suppose, made them kick; for to touch the springs of wealth is to touch the apple of the eye. Since that we have had this question before the leaders' meeting: 'Is it consistent with our general rules for a member of our society to follow any business that will lead him to the habitual use of the Sabbath?' We had much warmth of feeling on this in the leaders' meeting for two nights, until about twelve o'clock, and it remains as yet unsettled. I have thought and do think that, unless the Methodist Church in this city is reformed, we can never hope to see a revival here to any great extent. But you know I am not the man to bring the reformation about. Oh, that the merciful God would take the work into His own hands and effect what we so much need!

"Little doing in any part of the upper country that I hear of. I fear for our work. Brother Andrew Monroe, my presiding elder, has traveled almost none, and I fear he will not. This is bad. I think he will locate next Conference. What is to become of Missouri Methodism? Lord help us."

The above sketch is illuminating. It shows us a thoroughly discouraged pastor. A man who had no definite way before him. Not the man, as he says, to lead a reform. Incidentally we learn from his letter that he had been absent from his own charge three months, for he had made a round with Mc-

Allister on his district, which then embraced half the State of Missouri. He represents that his own presiding elder was traveling "almost none."

As to the whisky business, he says many of the first members were engaged in the trade, and when he had the matter debated by his own leaders' meeting it was only the question of doing secular business on Sunday that was considered open to debate. This picture presented does not inspire a longing to return to old-time Methodism.

The history shows that Edmondson did not locate at Conference, but was put on the St. Louis District. Andrew Monroe was left without an appointment. But the next Conference following Monroe was appointed to the district and Edmondson was again put in charge of the St. Louis Station (First Church).

A Bishop—Primus Inter Pares

In 1833, the Missouri Conference was held at Mountain Spring camp ground, near Cave Hill, in Arkansas. It was the first annual Conference held in the boundary of Arkansas Territory. The presiding Bishop was Joshua

Soule. He was especially interested in getting a knowledge of the Indian country. An interesting sketch of this visit and the conditions which the Bishop found is furnished us in a letter written by J. C. Berryman, who gives us the account of the Bishop's return trip, during two days that he journeyed with him. Brother Berryman had been appointed to the Indian work at the Conference and in this work he continued fourteen years—eight years with the Kickapoos, near Fort Leavenworth, and six years at the Shawnee Manual Labor School. Brother Berryman says:

"Bishop Soule, on his way to Cave Hill Camp, 1833, had made a tour of inspection of the country. He had provided himself with two beautiful Canadian ponies and what he called a 'Jersey Wagon,' in which he was making his episcopal tour in the West.

"His next Conference required his return through Missouri and he gathered up his outfit and started on his journey, accompanied by Andrew Monroe, Jesse Green, and the Johnsons (Thomas, William and Benjamin) and myself—six besides the Bishop. The first night we spent at the house of a Mr. Locke. Brother Green had a hard chill and was very sick all night. The Bishop, also, was unwell. We had a cold rain all forenoon of the next day and did not resume

our journey until afternoon. It was fifteen miles to the next house on our route, which house we reached at sunset. We found the improvements to consist of a stockpen and a cabin, built of small round logs, which Mr. Renfro, the proprietor, said he had raised with no assistance except that given him by his wife. The height of the cabin was just sufficient for the door to come under the first rib on which the rafters rested. The cracks of the walls were chinked, but not daubed. The chat-and-clay chimney occupied nearly the entire space of one end of the building, and the sixteen or eighteen feet square of Mother Earth on which the building stood was the floor. In each corner, in the end opposite the fireplace, there was a board scaffold bed, which, with a few rough stools, a square table of similar make, and a few cooking utensils, constituted the inventory of household furniture.

"And did we seven travelers, including a Bishop, lodge there that night? What else could we do? It was seventeen miles to the next human habitation. Of course we turned in with a hearty welcome from Mr. and Mrs. Renfro and their six children.

"Of course we carried some provisions for an emergency like this."

Sketch of Rev. Wesley J. Browning

I have before me a letter dated September 3, 1819, directed to Wesley J. Browning, and

signed Nathan Walker. I quote from it: "One request I make of you, that you, once every day meet me at a throne of grace; for I intend to pray for you once every day for six weeks. At that time I want you to send me a letter stating whether you have complied with my request."

I have Wesley J. Browning's journal, in which I find a reference to this letter. He says in respect to his early life: "I was put to school early and learned some good and much evil." He mentions "swearing, Sabbath-breaking and an abundance of mischievous tricks." He says he continued in a sinful life until his course was arrested by a friend and former associate when he was past twenty-four years old. This young friend, a companion in his wickedness, had moved away, had become converted and, passing through the old neighborhood, dropped him this letter. The letter referred to former companionship, told how the writer had found Christ, and it urged Browning with fervent exhortation to seek the Lord. "He wrote me a letter and left it with my aunt to hand to me. In this letter he laid me under injunction to pray every day for six weeks, and then let him know the result. This letter went like a dagger to my heart."

I

Mr. Browning relates the effect of this letter upon his conduct and experience until he passed from darkness to light. First he resisted conviction and tried to break it with defiant indulgence, which only reacted in the deeper sense of his sinful and lost condition. He then took up the charge of the letter and prayed twice a day, scrupulously restraining his conduct. But his burden and sense of condemnation were little relieved. At length he resolved to do the duties of a Christian, to read the Scriptures and pray daily, after which light and peace began to come into his heart. By Christmas he began to feel identified with God's children. But it was on the first day of April following, at a quarterly meeting at Chillicothe, Ohio, that he experienced the witness of the Spirit that he had passed from death unto life.

And here is the letter of Nathan Walker to his friend Browning, written a hundred and seven years ago. How that man of God, whom the old Methodists about St. Louis today speak of as "Father Browning," cherished this letter! Seventy-three years he kept it as a sacred treasure, for he died at the age

of ninety-three. And his son, Fletcher Browning, of Kansas City, sends it to me with his father's journal which tells about it. Wesley J. Browning felt that he had this letter from God, that it was an inspired message. What encouragement is in this to Christians to give expression to the spirit of the saving Christ in their souls.

II

Keeping in mind that it was in 1820 and when Mr. Browning was twenty-five years old that he was converted, this sketch from his journal will be the more interesting.

"In 1822 I was appointed class leader at Twin Creek Meetinghouse in father's neighborhood. About August or September of the same year I was licensed to exhort. This license was renewed in 1823 and 1824. In 1824, I was licensed to preach by the Quarterly Conference of Chillicothe, Ohio. This license was renewed in 1825 and 1826. In October, 1826, I was admitted on trial into the Ohio Conference, at Hillsboro. My first charge was Brush Creek Circuit, in Adams County, with twenty-six appointments, where meetings were held every four weeks. My next charge was Paint Creek Circuit; my third, in 1828, was Cincinnati, with John F. Wright."

In 1830, Mr. Browning was transferred to the Pittsburgh Conference and stationed in Pittsburgh. His next charge was Steubenville District, which he served four years. He was sent to Wheeling Station in 1836. This charge he held two years and was then appointed to Liberty Street, Pittsburgh, which he served one year. The work which is detailed in the journal during these years we cannot present in this sketch.

III

The character of his appointments shows the high standing as a preacher which W. J. Browning attained in the early years of his ministry. At this point we quote from his journal:

> "For a number of years calls for more laborers in the West had been urgent. Some had gone and returned, others remained. Having no family but my wife, on consulting her, we concluded to offer ourselves for the West and at the Conference of 1839 I told Bishop Joshua Soule that if he thought well to send us we were willing to go, and, accordingly he transferred us to Missouri. I bought a horse and buggy, shipped our goods to St. Louis, packed our trunk and made the journey all the way by land from Pittsburgh, arriving at Fayette, Mo., the

seat of the Conference, at the beginning of the session. At this Conference I was appointed to superintend the Indian Manual Training School, located six miles from Kansas Landing. (The place is now Kansas City, Kansas.) Here I had a year of hard work, at the end of which I was appointed in charge of the church in St. Louis. Here on the 15th of September, 1841, my dear wife died—a woman of amiable disposition of mind and heart, of good education, deep piety and fully consecrated to God."

IV

We cannot follow the long career of Wesley J. Browning in the St. Louis Conference. He was married again and for many years had no superior as a preacher and counselor among the preachers. His wife was also a fit helper. He was sixty-eight years a Methodist preacher and passed to his reward at ninety-three years of age.

As an item to illustrate the financial system of those days I give a memorandum of Wesley J. Browning's finances at First Church, St. Louis, in 1841: Quarterage, $200; two and a half months' board, $80; eight months' house rent, $231.57; fuel, $37.75; table expenses, $200; traveling expenses, $42; repairing furniture, $5.87; books, $2.15. Total,

$800. Received, $669.50. Balance due, $131.50, but shall never get it.

Wesley J. Browning's service of the Master as a preacher of the gospel extended through sixty-four years. His natural life ran to the age of ninety-three.

These notes and sketches might be extended to embrace the work of many others of the pioneer preachers of Missouri the equals in service of those herein presented—their "brethren and companions in tribulation and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ." But to mirror a passing picture is our aim, and what we have presented will suffice.

CHAPTER VII

Retrospect

The Effect of the Church's Growth upon the Character of our Preaching

An Address delivered before the Missouri Conference at its Centenary Celebration, 1916.

By J. E. GODBEY, D.D.

Our retrospect of the history of Methodism during the progress of a century in the territory originally assigned to the Missouri Conference in 1816 has inpressed us with the wonderful vitality of the Wesleyan Movement and the manner in which it has been owned and guided by the Great Head of the church. It invites us to contemplate the whole history of Methodism from the start, spirit, development, and providential purpose. It is not a far view to the beginning of Methodism. In the year 1862, I had as a member of my church, the Asbury Chapel in St. Louis, an English lady, who had heard John Wesley preach. Certainly, the Methodist Church

does not seem very old to me. I think its membership has increased during my own lifetime sevenfold. We all understand that it was not in Wesley's plan to found a church. In his sermons he made no issues with the church in which he was born and in which he died. He loved and revered the Established Church of England. He made no attacks upon its ministers; he did not challenge its doctrines, nor its polity. He clung to its rituals. Wesley felt the love of Christ constraining him to save sinners, to stir believers to higher spiritual ideals and aims, to spread scriptural holiness over the land. When he said "The world is my parish," he expressed a zeal for the unsaved which would not allow him to be content with the limitations and routine work of a rectorship, but yearned toward those without whom he designated the world as distinguished from those whom he reckoned to be of the fold. It was a characteristic of Wesley that with his zeal and strength of purpose he was docile to the leading of God's providence. He did not think to found a church, rather, he thought to put new wine into old bottles, to organize societies of people, longing for spiritual life and freedom and thereby leaven the church. His

Societies were composed of members of various churches or of no church at all. A leader who claimed for himself the experience of conscious regeneration and the witness of the Spirit met these seekers after a better experience once a week to inquire how their souls prospered.

We know Wesley consented with reluctance to the organizing of the Societies in America into a church, a thing he would not allow to the Societies at home.

The providence of God shaped things to this end. It is known that the Methodist Church, organized in the City of Baltimore, on Christmas day, in 1784, is the oldest Methodist Church and parent organization of Methodism in America, and the only one shaped by Wesley's hand. The Methodist Episcopal Church of the United States of America claims Wesley directly as its founder. More fully than any other branch of the now great Methodist family, it represents Wesley's conceptions and ideals. And in its beginning through its first Bishop, Francis Asbury, a man of Wesley's choosing, it was fully imbued with Wesley's evangelistic spirit.

From the Conference which organized the

church in Baltimore there went forth eighty-three preachers to invade a wilderness. They were not educated men. They were for the most part, boys. They were not sent to establish pastoral charges. Their appointments were geographical. They were assigned realms to conquer. They had no salaries. They preached in cabins of the pioneers, in the open air, under brush arbors. They preached every day. They spoke to any who would hear them when they stopped at noon, and the pioneer sent out and called in his neighbors to hear preaching where they stopped at night. We cannot dwell upon these conditions. You will think of Bishop Asbury traversing all the country from the Atlantic seaboard to the Mississippi Valley on horseback and preaching every day where there were virtually no houses of worship. His salary at first was sixty-four dollars a year, afterwards eighty. Every other preacher had the same allowance. You will think how, on his journey, he stopped to talk to a negro whom he saw fishing, and prayed with him till he was converted. You will call to mind how St. Louis in Missouri and Nashville in Tennessee were once in the same presiding elder's district and William McKendree was

the presiding elder. These are suggestions of what Methodism was one hundred years ago.

These early preachers were evangelists. They could be nothing else. They did not take up another man's line of business to their hand. They did not build on another man's foundation. They had really no churches to manage. They had sinners to convert and a church to build. If they had not an appeal to call sinners to repentance, they were without a message. The criterion of their success was the number of converts. A sermon that did not lead to the mourner's bench was a failure.

The Methodist preachers sought the neglected, without a call, without promise of reward, without houses in which to preach they went forth to seek and to save the lost. This was primitive Methodism and the remembrance of such things preserves the traditions of what many think was surely a more spiritual church and ministry than we have to-day. The rude log church, or brush arbor, the homespun dresses of the women, the simple worship, in which one hymn book served a congregation because the preacher lined the hymn and even the log cabins in

which the people lived are to them evidences of a pure heart and simple faith in God. But they were crude conditions enforced by stern necessity against which all that was best in nature and worthy aspiration was struggling. The preacher was a hardy pioneer. The people whom he served were as hardy and self-denying. He braved dangers and hardships to win souls, but no more than hunters braved to kill the panther or the bear. He had rude shelter and hard fare. It was always the best that the people could afford. There was not then a community so rude that did not regard a true minister of the gospel as one who was a friend and a promoter of all true interest, and even profane and sinful men were still the preacher's friends. Asbury, they say, received eighty dollars' salary. It did not require much to support episcopal dignity then. I have seen the record from St. George's Church, Philadelphia, of a bill of expenses which Asbury sent to be paid by the stewards on his visit there. Among the items were cost of a shave and a nightshirt. Asbury was economical. I remember when my father traveled a circuit of fourteen appointments and received for the year only twenty-eight dollars. He was economical too. But

I say those conditions were enforced. They were conditions which all right-minded worthy people sought to remove. Conditions forced the preachers to be roving evangelists. They could be nothing else as preachers. But these early preachers struggled to establish Societies. They would build houses of worship and homes for preachers to live in, and establish an order of worship, more comely, more dignified and expressive both of intelligence and piety. They would build up churches and organize them into working bands. By their prayers and labors the church appears as we see it to-day. A mighty organized host, an army with banners pushing the conquests of the kingdom in all lands. To-day, we have millions in churches, millions in universities and Publishing Houses, millions in missions and millions in charities. The leader of the church to-day must be something else than an evangelist. The church has magnified agencies for molding public sentiment and a common faith. And because it has grown to be a mighty force there is demand that the force be wisely wielded for the largest and best results. The obligation of the church or individual is measured by power. In the beginning of Christianity the

believer was a captive in an enemy's country, whose only thought was to hold fast the faith, endure affliction and be faithful unto death that he might receive the crown of life. So the Christian cherished the piety of meditation and communion with God. But the promise of the gospel is not personal salvation alone, but a new earth in which dwelleth righteousness. The obligation is upon the church to right social and political wrongs when the church has power to do it. It is obligatory upon the church to foster sound learning, to disseminate by means of the press right public ideals. When the church has grown great and is armed with agencies and resources for reaching out upon every side and touching the world abroad, then the obligation also comes upon the church to do all this. When the preacher's audience is a great assembly of intelligent Christians his sermon need not be a call to repentance. If he knows how to preach to such an audience he will set forth all the struggle for better conditions with which Christians should be allied. A preacher in such condition is the commander of a company, armed and equipped and not a recruiting officer. He is called to be a pastor rather than an evangelist and a teacher rather

than an exhorter. He must direct the activities of church members so as to make the whole church an efficient and mighty army. He is called to present from the pulpit themes which would have had no relevancy to the work of the early preachers.

We must also observe that the preacher who addresses a great educated Christian audience will realize that his business is to instruct. He will present Christian doctrine as it stands related to the learning, the science and philosophy of the times.

To put scriptural doctrines in a form which seems to clash with and contradict established truths of science is to be responsible for their rejection. All truths must agree together. If anyone objects to interpreting scripture in the light of the philosophy of the times he ought to be reminded that the philosophy of the Third Century shaped the theology of the Christian Church and even the theological teachings of Paul and John show very manifest influence of the philosophy of their times. One may accept the scriptural statement of a truth or an experience as a child accepts the declaration that the earth is round, but the psychological or philosophical expression and explanation of such things will be very im-

portant in winning the acceptance of such truths by educated minds. The preacher who addresses an audience of non-Christians needs to be an earnest evangelist or an apologist of Christian doctrine, but before a great church or an educated Christian audience he should be a teacher or Christian philosopher. As the church grows in wealth and learning and multiplies agencies of Christian teaching and science the church comes to mean much more than the preacher. A great congregation of educated men and women in a great church, which concretes in brick or wood or stone, a fit expression of their faith and devotion and which stands as a monument to the Christian cause is a sermon far more powerful in its appeal to thoughtful minds, than any sermon that the minister can preach. It is the most impressive expression of the truth that what is greatest and best, most inspiring and controlling in our civilization is the Christian religion. It may also be said that as churches become greater and stronger they become more liberal. A denomination or sect when it is weak and struggling for existence emphasizes its distinctive views or practices. It is upon these that it justifies its existence. But when the church grows strong and its

activities are directed to many schemes for the general good, the sharp distinctions of a denominational character fade out. Colleges and universities may be founded and sustained by the churches, but they are not distinctively denominational. Nor is the general literature of the church denominational. Nor can a great church afford to refuse coöperation with other denominations in any work which promotes the public welfare.

It has been observed that Christians will contend and divide into parties while they seek the criterion of true religion in "the form of sound words," for many are never able to distinguish the "form of sound words," from the formal sound of words, but you can unite the contending parties for righting some great wrong or removing some great evil. We often see eye to eye in practical issues when we contend about theories and creeds. The very strength which the church has attained tends to unity. The manifest obligation of entering the field as the champion of all movements which have in view the uplifting of humanity and the appeal which is made for the church's aid in all philanthropic movements has mustered the churches upon the field not only of missionary conquest but of

social service at home and united their forces in common efforts for the public good. Shut within himself and making the test of spiritual religion an inward experience of regeneration and the witness of the Spirit one may fall into fatal delusions. At first our Methodist people were distinguished chiefly as the professors of a spiritual experience. That there was often extravagant profession attended, with little fruit of the Spirit, must be confessed. The church was not then, as now, an organized army, in which everyone professing to be saved could be tested by some form of service. But professors of religion need these practical tests and the preachers properly stress service more than profession. We used to be chary of associating Christian duty with effort for social or political reforms. But to-day temperance is in politics, white slavery is in politics, child labor is in politics, protection of women is in politics, a just wage for the toiler is in politics and all because the church has put them in politics. It is the influence of Christian teaching and the demands of Christian sentiment which compels legislatures to concern themselves about the moral welfare of the people, not less than their temporal prosperity.

We rejoice in the growth of the church. But every condition brings its perils. And there are perils to spiritual religion in our great churches. We are apt to reckon material prosperity of the church as one with the advance of true Christianity. But it is not necessarily so, and frequently a church zeal is not a zeal for Christ.

Jesus saw in the Pharisees of His day a church zeal which spared no effort to win members, but won them only to pride and Pharisaical pretentions. Sometimes a preacher whose heart yearns for the salvation of souls feels that the church which he serves is a prison. He is ruled by an official board, whose ideals of church work are drawn from the business of the factory or department store. Their methods they insist upon as business methods, and they seek visible results. But a devout pastor feels only the outward show of prosperity is regarded. A church can weaken spiritually as it strengthens materially and die by business methods. In an elegant worship when appeal is made to taste the preacher may often be enthralled and addresses his discourses to the critical taste of his audience rather than their conscience. But granting fervent zeal for the salvation

of souls in the preacher, his great church will often seem to him a prison, for the world of the unconverted, the masses who make no profession or claims of following our Lord do not come to our great churches. Our best efforts to draw them fail. Learned discourses and elegant worship do not attract them. The churches seem to belong to the already Christian community. They have their social meetings, their children attend the Sunday School and the preacher is a pastor who manages societies, looks after manifold collections, has his Education Day, Church Extension Day, Missionary Day, and visits as much as he can his parishioners.

He is not an evangelist and he finds no way to be an evangelist though his heart yearns for it. Sometimes he grows desperate and announces a protracted meeting. But the outsiders do not come. Under these conditions our preachers slowly yield to the pastorate and try to satisfy their consciences by keeping the machinery burnished and raising the collections. We justify our surrender to such bondage by saying, "A great church must develop from within," and it is said that we have so far yielded to these conditions that seventy per cent of our members, or more,

come into the church from the Sunday School. We have almost ceased to look for increase of members except through social influences. We are losing from our pulpits the great soul-stirring preachers whose sermons appeal to brain and conscience. The successful preacher is the man who can best manipulate the forces of a great church and please his official board. Our preachers are cumbered with much serving. They have not time even to feed their own souls with prayer and meditation and reading until the heart glows with a burning message which he must deliver. We have had set before us the self-denial and heroic courage of the pioneer preacher. But the ministry of to-day meets a more crucial test. Those preachers who were the forerunners of the church delivered the same exhortation daily for a month. A dozen fervent appeals were enough for a year's campaign—we may almost say for a lifetime, for at the end of the year they received a new charge and could preach them all over again. Riding over the mountains and through the wilderness, fording rivers and eating bacon and cabbage in the cabins of the pioneers was not a service which exhausted the nerves and bewildered the brain and called for vacations. Many a

preacher who has preached twice every Sunday to the same congregation and delivered the Wednesday evening lecture, visited the sick as was needed, managed half a dozen societies, looked after a dozen collections for four years in the same fold would find the work of the pioneer preacher a glorious vacation. The preacher of to-day is more severely tested and the member of the church is also more severely tested than in the good old times. Paul's declaration, "All the law is fulfilled in one word, even in this, 'Thou shalt love thy neighbor as thyself,'" is being emphasized and the criterion of true religion is reckoned to be true service of our fellow men. That spirit will unite us. It will end our contentions about creeds. It will turn us to that which alone endures, for charity never faileth. We find a common foundation and bond of union in Paul's charge to all believers: "Finally, brethren, whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are honorable, whatsoever things are just, whatsoever things are pure, whatsoever things are lovely, whatsoever things are of good report; if there be any virtue, and if there be any praise, think on these things."

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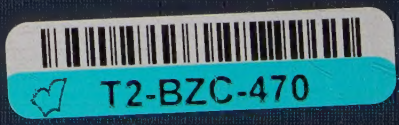
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